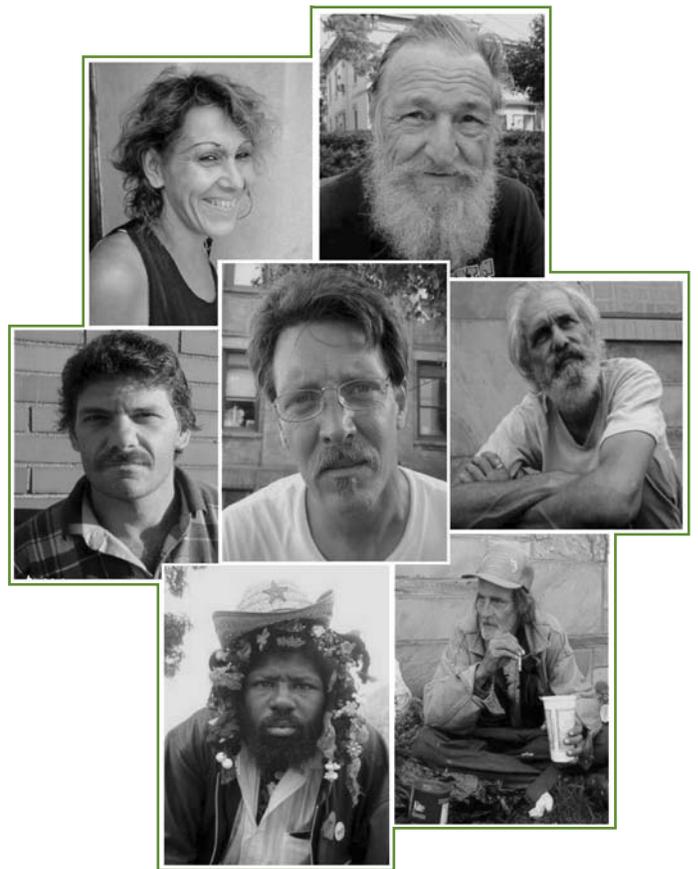


ORGANIZE

EMPOWER

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ADVOCATE



NORTHEAST OHIO COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS
2006 ANNUAL REPORT



2006 Highlights



Advocacy

- * Constructed a “Homeless Congress.” This is a group of representatives from Cleveland’s homeless shelters who are devoted to political change and community action to solve homelessness.
- * Organized resident council meetings for the women of the Community Women Shelter as well as the men at 2100 Lakeside Shelter.
- * Worked on the coordination of outreach workers locally to interact with homeless people who choose not to utilize shelters.
- * Successfully sued the State of Ohio to allow homeless people who didn’t have identification the right to vote.

AmeriCorps*VISTA - *provides a link to the community on homeless and poverty issues while developing and implementing programs locally*

- * Street Voices, NEOCH’s speaker bureau program has made over 20 presentations.
- * Created a recognition luncheon for NEOCH’s faithful and appreciated volunteers.
- * Organized a meeting with homeless liaisons in Cuyahoga schools to discuss their roles and responsibilities to children who become homeless.
- * Designed the first Veteran’s Homeless Street card.

Bridging the Gap - *provides a link to affordable housing and local resources*

- * BTG has housed 51 people and provided a welcome home basket for all of them.
- * BTG has served over 400 people with life skill classes.
- * Focused attention toward serving veterans in need of housing.
- * Expanded the reach of HousingCleveland.org with over 1,000 people using the website everyday and over 1,500 vacant units listed on the site.

Cleveland Homeless Legal Assistance - *provides a link to legal assistance*

- * CHLAP has increased the number of intakes from 400 to serving 658 clients in 2006.
- * CHLAP has increased the number of lawyers, law students and paralegals volunteering with the program.
- * Created a Pro Se Divorce Clinic that averages 22 individuals each session.
- * Added one additional weekly clinic and two monthly clinics.

Cleveland Community Voice Mail - *provides a link to reliable and private communication*

- * Celebrated the first ever “Voice Mail Day” in April.
- * Successfully migrated to a new voicemail system.
- * Successfully enrolled over 1,700 individuals in Cuyahoga and Lorain Counties.
- * CCVM created new partnerships with 7 local agencies.

Grapevine - *provides a source of income to homeless and low income people while informing the community on poverty issues*

- * Received the Knight Batten Foundation honorable mention award.
- * Published 5 issues including one with Cleveland’s Mayor Frank Jackson
- * Developed an advertising program.
- * Improved production and layout of the paper so that the “16 pages of depression” look appealing to the reader.

Board President's Message

No one would be happier than NEOCH's staff and board to discover that they were out of jobs because homelessness was no longer a problem in Northeast Ohio. Unfortunately, this will not be the case in the near future. Our community did not see a reduction of homelessness in 2006; there are still more than 4,000 homeless individuals every night, of which nearly 500 are families with children, in Cuyahoga County.

Although the homeless are still among us in significant numbers, NEOCH was instrumental in gaining further protections and services for them. In 2006, NEOCH worked to safeguard voting rights when it helped launch a successful challenge to Ohio's voter I.D. law, a law which would have denied the vote to those who did not have the required forms of identification. NEOCH also helped ensure the rights of the homeless in shelters through the organization of men and women into groups that could effectively air their concerns. The Homeless Congress, a group of homeless individuals from the different shelters, was formed and meets monthly to address relevant issues.

NEOCH's programs continue to do a lot with a little as they expand services for constituents. The Homeless Legal Assistance Program added clinics so that more homeless individuals could access help. Community Voice Mail re-established services in Lorain County. In 2007 it will expand to additional communities and work to double its current 1,000-person client base. During the past year, Bridging The Gap focused on services to veterans. The program also received funding to hire a new director who plans to open the waiting list to help more families.

On the state level, NEOCH continued to develop with partners the concept of an Ohio Coalition of Homeless Advocates organization. Nationally, NEOCH worked with colleagues in the National Coalition of the Homeless to protect the civil rights of homeless people.

Homeless people in Greater Cleveland still lack basic rights and services to which we are all entitled. Yet we remain optimistic that continued advocacy, united with the efforts of political leaders such as Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson, will continue to advance NEOCH's mission of safe and affordable housing, health care, and a living wage income for all of those living in Northeast Ohio.

Sincerely,
Margaret Madrigal Wilson
President
NEOCH Board of Trustees



2006 Advisory Board Members



Angelo Anderson
Joan Gallagher
Eric Henz
Howard Johnson
Toni Johnson
Johanna Keenan
Heather Stuart
Karen Worley

Bridging the Gap

2100 Lakeside Men Shelter
Volunteer
Cleveland Christian Home
Volunteer
Veteran Administration
NEOCH Board of Directors
Sai Heather and Associates Corp
Good Shepard Inc



Cleveland Community Voice Mail

Dawn Burns
Ross Fertel
Teri Heer
Amy Lomis
Keith Moody
Dave Westcott
John Wolak

Cleveland Housing Network
Project ACT
Volunteer
Toward's Employment
Veteran Administration - 2100 Lakeside
NEOCH Board of Directors
Pass Program

Cleveland Homeless Legal Assistance Program

Robert Anderle
Mary Groth
Jon Smibert

Porter Wright Morris and Arthur Firm
Cleveland Bar Association
NEOCH Board of Directors

Homeless Grapevine Newspaper

Angelo Anderson
Clark Campbell
Arthur Price
Mark Read
Frank Timko

Cathy Brown
Delores Manley
Arthur Price, Jr.
Marsha Rizza Swanson
Tony



Thank You

Reflections from the Executive Director

The Coalition for the Homeless had a very good year in 2006 with regard to most of our programs and we rebuilt a few of the areas that we were struggling with in 2005. The organization is structured by the Board of Trustees with the Executive Director overseeing all advocacy including the Homeless Grapevine newspaper. All of our programs (Voice Mail, Bridging the Gap, Legal Assistance and Public Education) are under the guidance of Director of Operations. The two senior staff share the Development and Administrative functions for the organization. The good news was that all four of the programs finished with a surplus in order to continue work in 2007, and the overall agency finished with a balanced financial statement at the end of 2006.

I wanted to highlight two areas that go beyond the numbers served that were a focal point for the agency for 2006. NEOCH has conducted advocacy meetings for years to get homeless people to advocate for themselves. This kept us current about the issues homeless people face on the streets and in the shelters, but it did not forward our goals of organizing and empowering homeless people. In 2006, we changed our strategy to invite homeless people to what we called a "Homeless Congress." We invited each shelter and then people who live on the streets to send two representatives (six for 2100 Lakeside) to bring the views of homeless people to the table, but then to take the issues back to the shelter for discussion. This created a more representative process where homeless people debate issues, recommend solutions, and feel like they are responsible to a segment of the population.

The Homeless Congress set priorities and then met with bureaucrats as well as elected officials to refocus priorities back to solving homelessness. We have heard loud and clear from Phillip who has physical health issues but makes it over to the Bishop Cosgrove Center for meetings, that housing needs to be our highest priority. We get to hear from Robert every few weeks that all of his constituents who live in the E section of 2100 Lakeside have a hard time moving into housing because of the number of people waiting. Michael brings to the table the issues from the Disabled Men's Shelter and wants us to start a resident council at his shelter. We also heard the poor state of

nutrition and food preparation within the shelters from Antoinette who then invited the Cleveland Foodbank to the next meeting to hear about how we can get better food delivered to the shelters.

Throughout this report you will see the numbers of people that we serve, but stepping back from that please keep in mind that we serve all 25,000 people who became homeless last year. We fought to make sure that every homeless person who wanted to vote had that opportunity no matter if they had identification or not. We fought nearly everyday to make sure that homeless people are met with the highest quality standards at every shelter and every service in the community. We also began to try to put forward a unified message for every outreach worker that goes out to serve people on the streets. We hope that people who choose not to utilize the shelters have a safe place open to them 24 hours a day and that we can encourage more people to go inside on these cold days. Behind the scenes, we also met with elected leaders with homeless people to keep the issues of housing, jobs, healthcare and civil rights as a high priority.

Going beyond the budget, the numbers, the programs of NEOCH are the people who come to us for help. We get hundreds of calls every year looking for help. We touch thousands of people with our programs; I want to highlight one individual. One person, Don, was helped into housing through the Bridging the Gap program. He was a part of the 2100 Resident Council while he was homeless. He helped NEOCH with organizing a demonstration on housing then was referred to the BTG housing program. He was successful in getting into a subsidized housing complex and now continues to work with the Street Voices speaker's bureau project. He is always willing to help the seniors in the building by shopping for groceries or giving new residents the tour of the neighborhood and the programs offered in the building. He loves having a place to put his clothing. He loves having a balcony to enjoy the outdoors without having to sleep outdoors. Don loves having a bed that cannot be taken away or that he will find someone else using without his permission. His talents and skills offered to the community have blossomed since finding a stable place to call home.

By Brian Davis

2006 Overview

Advocacy

The Coalition for the Homeless did a great deal of work on protecting the rights of homeless people to vote. We lobbied against a horrible reform bill that was passed then we filed suit against the State of Ohio to assure that those individuals without identification can still participate in democracy by voting. We eventually won the suit, but only days before the election in November. NEOCH has a new relationship with the Mayor of Cleveland who attended our Homeless Memorial Day, the first mayor to ever do so. Also in attendance was Councilman Joe Santiago.

As Cleveland was once again identified as the poorest city in America, NEOCH constructed a representative body of homeless people called the Homeless Congress. This group meets frequently to set priorities, propose policy and move forward on solving homelessness. The Homeless Congress has been very busy we met with our good friend Michael Foley, who became a Representative to the Ohio State House, about enacting homeless hate crimes legislation. The Homeless Congress is currently coming up with minimum shelter standards to be adopted by the city, right now there are no universal rules mandated by the city for how shelters must operate.

NEOCH has worked to become more involved in the problems families face when they become homeless, and to that end has staff working in the largest women's

shelter in Cuyahoga County. Staff members are involved in coordination of the outreach teams in Cuyahoga County in an attempt to provide a social service response to homelessness over law enforcement. NEOCH also worked to strengthen the safety net for veterans who become homeless with the introduction of the Veteran's Homeless Street Card and a focus on housing veterans. NEOCH continued to work with statewide advocates on the development of a statewide Coalition and held a position on the National Coalition for the Homeless Board of Directors.

CCVM

Cleveland Community Voice Mail spent much of 2006 working to increase our client base and providing great customer service to our participating agencies. After migration to new voice mail system in late 2005 we were able to serve over 1700 clients with 1000 of those people still actively seeking self sufficiency. CCVM was able to partner with 7 new agencies that will provide this vital tool to their clients. With the new technology that's available to us, CCVM looked at how we could continue to improve delivery of our product and what features we could add to assure our clients success. Through client surveys and community forums CCVM added broadcast messaging, that allows a large number of clients to receive messages about important community events at once.

Fundraising for CCVM can be challenging, but in 2006 the pro-

gram was able to secure enough funds to keep this program moving towards the future. These funds have allowed CCVM to spend time looking at how to replicate this service in other communities in Ohio. Currently we are in the planning stages for programs in Summit and Allen Counties.

Homeless Grapevine Newspaper

In 2006, *The Homeless Grapevine* built a solid foundation for a stellar 2007. We received funding from the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council to establish a photography training program for homeless people, and a boost from Neighborhood Connections to train new vendors in the Central neighborhood of Cleveland. Our advertising program gained new ground, and we built a website where fans of our social justice coverage can purchase Grapevine goods to support our program: www.cafepress.com/homelessgv.

2006 was also an excellent year for our paper's content as well. *The Homeless Grapevine* scored interviews with Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson and the DC Central Kitchen's Robert Egger. To top it all off, we were also given Honorable Mention by the Knight Batten Foundation for our relentlessly extensive coverage of Cleveland's panhandling ordinance.

2006 Overview continued

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps*VISTA members helped to jump start many advocacy, Community Voice Mail and Bridging the Gap initiatives this year! Members were instrumental in compiling a list of homeless liaison contacts for each school district in Cuyahoga County. According to the rules of No Child Left Behind, each school district must designate one person as their homeless liaison. After this list was fully compiled, we invited all liaisons to a training session on the responsibilities and duties of a homeless liaison. We worked with Dr. Marcia Zashin from Cleveland Municipal School District's Project ACT to organize this training and invited Tom Dannis from the Ohio Department of Education to speak. Sixteen districts attended the training.

Members assist with the organization of Resident Council meetings at the Community Women's Shelter. This is the first time NEOCH has been allowed to speak with the women since 2004. Having a resident council meeting allow the CWS residents to air their complaints, suggestions and grievances to the staff at NEOCH, who then meet with the executive director of the shelter to address their concerns.

Members helped to implement CCVM's first annual Voice Mail Day on April 26th. There was a contest among our agencies to see who could sign up the most clients on that day. By the end of the day, almost 100 new clients were added onto the system. We decided to continue the trend by holding contests during the summer in what was called the Cleveland Summer Connection.

Members worked to strengthen the Street Voices Speaker Bureau program, which gave 22 presentations and trained over 10 new homeless and formerly homeless individuals to speak. Members also organized a recognition luncheon to celebrate the volunteers who helped NEOCH during the year. Members make a big difference in creating a system to track clients and assisted over 50 clients into permanent housing.

2006 Financial Report

NEOCH Revenue 2006

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------|-----|
| Foundation | \$225,490 | 65% |
| Government | \$45,529 | 13% |
| Community Shares | \$18,624 | 5% |
| Individual Support | \$16,248 | 5% |
| Special Events | \$12,112 | 3% |
| Membership | \$12,039 | 3% |
| Religious | \$7,209 | 2% |
| Grapevine Sales/Ads | \$4,787 | 1% |
| Program Fees | \$4,184 | 1% |
| Corporations | \$896 | <1% |
| Program Operation | \$528 | <1% |
| Total Revenue* | \$347,646 | |
| Donated Goods/Services | \$72,130 | |

NEOCH Expenses 2006

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------|
| Salaries | \$154,587 | 52% |
| Reserved for 2007 Programs | \$51,766 | ---- |
| Taxes/Benefits | \$34,850 | 12% |
| Rent | \$22,505 | 8% |
| Professional Services | \$15,054 | 5% |
| Voice Mail System | \$12,398 | 4% |
| Payment to Line of Credit | \$10,400 | 4% |
| Training/Travel | \$7,393 | 2% |
| Telephone/Internet | \$5,485 | 2% |
| Photocopying | \$5,244 | 2% |
| Office Supplies | \$5,189 | 2% |
| Program Operations and Equipment | \$4,994 | 2% |
| Bank Fees | \$4,945 | 2% |
| Grapevine Printing | \$3,915 | 1% |
| Printing | \$3,623 | 1% |
| Postage | \$3,048 | 1% |
| Conference/Membership | \$1,479 | <1% |
| Insurance | \$768 | <1% |
| Total* | \$347,646 | |
| Donated Services by Attorneys | \$72,130 | |

*unaudited bookkeeping financial report. These will be adjusted with the audit by an independent auditor.

2006 Overview continued

Bridging the Gap

The Bridging the Gap program went through several transitions in 2006 and staff worked diligent to stabilize the program. The program lost its entire staff, program director, housing placement manager and tenant liaison this past year. Other social service providers who could provide larger salaries recruited staffs. Halfway through the grant, the program was run by the Director of Operations acting as the interim director one full time AmeriCorps*VISTA and one part time AmeriCorps*VISTA. However the program accomplished much, BTG served approximately 500 people. The program facilitated 11 life skill classes that served over 400 clients, housed 52 clients and delivered welcome home baskets to all newly housed clients. BTG was also part of the Housing Stand Down planning committee that took place at Cosgrove.

BTG welcomes the new addition to the staff: Valerie McCoy, Program Director and Emily Kiefer, AmeriCorps*VISTA. The program has created many goals for 2007 and NEOCH is certain that this new BTG team will achieve them all.

CHLAP

In 2006, CHLAP served 658 individuals, involving more than 700 legal issues. This is the greatest number of clients the program has seen since its inception. Clients most frequently raise divorce and other family law issues. Questions involving criminal and housing matters are next in line. Twenty-one lawyers volunteered their time to the Program in 2006. Their participation is valued at over \$72,000. The financial value of volunteer Paralegals and law students exceeds \$4,900. That is a vast improvement over the past years.

The Program closed the monthly evening intake session at May Dugan and opened a new intake site at Lakewood Christian Center. We responded to an invitation from the LCC leadership. The monthly Pro Se Divorce Clinic is a resounding success. The Clinics average

22 people for each session. The Domestic Relations Court is also happy with the Clinic as it makes the courts more efficient. The weekly intake clinics at May Dugan and Trinity Cathedral draw people from all over Greater Cleveland. These sessions provide an ongoing and familiar setting for clients. The monthly intake session at Trinity also allows CHLAP to be involved in the evolving programs at the Cathedral.

Securing funding from the legal community and other sources is an ongoing project. There is a possibility that the Cleveland Bar Foundation will increase its financial support in 2007. The program's greatest asset is the volunteers; without them, the Program would close.



Front Row: David, Marcia, Roy, Brian
Middle Row: Valerie, Margaret, Johanna, Summer
Back Row: Jill, Patrick, Thomas, Gary, Chris

2006 Award Winners

Staff

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Brian Davis | Executive Director |
| Teri D. Horne | Director of Operations |
| Michael Gibbs | Community Voice Mail Director |
| Joan Burda | Homeless Legal Assistance Director |
| Valerie McCoy | Bridging The Gap Program Director |
| Greg Reaves | Bridging The Gap Tenant Liaison |
| Deidre White | Bridging The Gap Housing Placement Manager |
| Kevin Cleary | Grapevine Managing Editor |
| Denise Cooper | Shared Development Director |
| Ivan Ridgeway | Administrative Support |
| Leonard Spence | Administrative Support |
| Sara Cantrick | AmeriCorps*VISTA |
| Charlene Higginbotham | AmeriCorps*VISTA |
| Joshua Kanary | AmeriCorps*VISTA |
| Emily Keifer | AmeriCorps*VISTA |
| Sarah Valek | AmeriCorps*VISTA |
| Ron Pleban | Intern |
| Rachel Kaufmann | Intern |
| Michelle Lasky | Intern |
| Joe Perrelli | Website Consultant |
| Doug Lonero | Accounting Consultant |

Advocate of the Year

Jim Schlecht

For his lifetime service and commitment to ending homelessness in Northeast Ohio

Volunteer of the Year

Bernadette Janes

For the service given to the homeless community as well as the dedication and time given to the Coalition

Roadblock of the Year

City of Akron

For passing and enforcing the most hateful panhandling law that even prevents people from asking for money near a church



Front Row: Valerie, Teri, Sarah, Joan, Emily
Back Row: Ivan, Kevin, Michael, Joshua, Brian



Leonard Spence and Bridging the Gap

By Bernadette Janes

There is pure pleasure in Leonard Spence's voice as he describes his work as an Administrative Assistant for Bridging the Gap in the NEOCH Cleveland offices. He especially enjoys his budding mastery of computers, something he had never imagined would be within his range of accomplishments. Yet it was partly that varied range of lifetime experience that helped bring him to the attention of Bridging the Gap as one who would fit into its own working group. With the help of Bridging the Gap, Leonard now has a comfortable one bedroom apartment in a friendly Cleveland Heights neighborhood, which offers many services in transportation and shopping. In addition, he has his own voicemail account in the Community Voicemail Program, and also has the opportunity to assist others through the same Bridging the Gap program that has been instrumental in helping him change the circumstances of his own life.

The youngest in a Pittsburgh, PA family of fourteen children, Leonard left Pittsburgh after his mother passed away. At that time, he came to Cleveland to work in a business owned by his older brother, a business which closed some years later when his brother also passed away. During the Vietnam War, Leonard served as a member of the 101st Airborne Division, a brave and ultimately famous parachuting company nicknamed The Screaming Eagles for their daring exploits in teeming, dangerous skies. Honorably discharged, he worked after the war for General Motors, and later in a steel mill for thirteen years, but was laid off lacking only two years in eligibility for a steelworker's lifelong pension. Always a dependable and steady worker, Leonard married and lived in Dayton with his wife throughout their twelve year marriage. He has many family members still living in Pittsburgh, including two sisters, many nieces, nephews and cousins, and his daughter and three grandchildren (two boys and a girl) whom he visits occasionally.

More recently, Leonard returned to Cleveland and was living at 2100 Lakeside when Bridging the Gap went there to register people fifty years old or older. With his good record and credit history, Leonard met all the qualifications. Once settled in the apartment in Cleveland Heights, Leonard was asked if he'd like to work for Bridging the Gap at NEOCH. He agreed, and now he alternates morning or afternoon hours on various duties, which include scheduling medical appointments for NEOCH's clients, faxing material to other organizations and news sources, calling Board members to remind them of meeting dates, and informing callers about Bridging the Gap, describing what kinds of assistance are available and how to get more information.

Leonard may also, in future, become a Street Speaker, sharing with audiences his positive experience with NEOCH and with Bridging the Gap, and imparting encouragement to others that the outcome he enjoys is within reach of many of those listening to him, if they will trust in NEOCH, and begin communicating with Bridging the Gap.



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Trinity Cathedral
United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland
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Wendy Deuriny

Thank You

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Cleveland Homeless Legal Assistance

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Bridging the Gap

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NEOCH's Mission is to organize and empower homeless and at-risk individuals to break the cycle of poverty through public education, advocacy, and the promotion of nurturing environments.