A Message from the Executive Director

We look back on 2018 with thanks and respect for how much our community made happen this past year through partnerships, strong community coordination across so many sectors and the relentless day in and day out work of the front line workers across the region who have made such a great difference in the lives of individuals, families and children across our communities. Together, our community pulled together and stepped up to the plate once again with a coordinated effort to increase our homelessness prevention activities, to step up rapid re-housing out of homeless shelters with supportive services and to assist hundreds of refugees from Hurricane Maria while continuing to serve those in need within our local community. Partnerships between service and shelter providers, state and local government, faith congregations, local businesses and committed citizens continue to grow and strengthen. I am so impressed with the concern of staff and the household they work with to keep pushing forward with relentless determination and focus on the mission of assisting families and individuals to move forward and attain a healthy and stable life. We are so proud of the deep collaboration across our community that reduce the risk of homelessness and promote policies and programs that remove barriers to stability and reduce the need over time for services. New challenges and opportunities await in the coming year. Let us continue to work as partners to be innovative in our community response to homelessness and income/housing inequality and continue to work with one family and one household at a time to achieve our shared mission. Thank you all for each of the critical pieces you bring to the table each and every day.

Looking forward,

Grace K. Carmark—Executive Director

Congratulations to the 2018 Award Recipients
Honoring Everyday Heroes

We recognize the following people for their commitment to our community and who share the spirit of CMHA:

**The David G. Palmgren Outstanding Business Leader Award**
Cary Olson Cartwright, Unum

**Janice Nadeau Award for Housing and Community Service**
Frank Kartheiser

**Judy Brown Cahill Award**
In Loving Memory of Heather MacDonald
It is an honor to serve as Board President of CMHA and on behalf of the Board and Staff, of an agency who partners with so many to bring hope and help to so many Worcester County residents, I want to extend a heartfelt Thank You to all who helped make 2018 such a successful year in meeting our shared mission. Our staff, board, and each of our programs are grounded in flexibility, respect for all served, and hope to achieve positive change in our communities. Our successes are shared with so many across multiple sectors who support our work through volunteering, donating and offering guidance on the best ways to make a positive impact in the lives of our neighbors in need. Collaboration, Creativity and Hard Work are our guiding principles and we look forward to 2019.

“Not everyone can do everything but all of us can do something” – Matt Ryan, Former CMHA Board member and Founder of Hope For Housing

Sincerely,

Sam Bitar – President

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Photo by Unleash the Lens Photography

Photo by Joe Santa Maria - Kill the Ball Media
Prevention • Self-sufficiency • Advocacy and Education • Collaboration • Resources

“Recognizing the dignity of all, CMHA leads a collaborative response to homelessness that fosters long-term housing stability through prevention, quality services, education and advocacy.”

Convening the Worcester County Continuum of Care (CoC)

CMHA is the convener of the Worcester County Continuum of Care and fosters long term planning to develop the most effective and humane approach to reducing homelessness in the region. Efforts include planning and ongoing collaborations with all service providers, stakeholders and government partners. In 2018, CMHA secured over 6 million dollars to fund 25 vital homeless services and supportive housing projects across the county. Utilizing three full time staff members, CMHA also manages a county wide data collection and reporting system for all homeless programs within the continuum to track success and needs in addressing homelessness. A diverse and broad range of community- based stakeholders serve on the CoC Advisory Board to ensure that services and housing provided by the CoC are the best match to community needs. The CoC provides 450 units of housing annually. A Coordinated Entry system of all providers meets bi-weekly with all relevant providers in order to ensure a reduction of homelessness and more successful and timely placements into safe and affordable housing.

Public Education & Advocacy

Public Education & Advocacy (PE&A) is at the heart of CMHA’s mission of addressing the root causes of homelessness. It works to raise awareness of the real issues of homelessness and lack of affordable housing opportunities. This is done through community education, coalition building, and mobilizing support for policy and budget initiatives that would result in real system changes that benefit those we serve. Recently, over 100 frontline service providers from 43 different agencies attended the Family Housing Information Forum. This yearly forum provides an opportunity for attendees to share and learn about resources available for families in the Worcester County Area. In the spring, PE&A hosted the annual Legislative Luncheon that was attended by nearly 100 concerned citizens and several members of the Worcester Area State Legislative Delegation. Along with other state wide advocacy partners, PE&A was a part of a success campaign to expand the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) program to include all populations, including elders, youth and disabled households. In addition, funding for the program was increased to $18.5 million, providing much needed homeless prevention funding for all Massachusetts residents. Most importantly, the program works with at-risk and formerly homeless families to influence decision makers and educating the public as to the barriers they face and puts a human face on the issue of homelessness.

Youth Against Homelessness

Youth Against Homelessness (YAH) is comprised of area high school faculty and students joining together to cultivate an atmosphere of engaged learning and positive engagement.

The Mission

$27,000 AMOUNT DISTRIBUTED FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION THROUGH HOPE FOR HOUSING

50 ADULTS INTEGRATED WORKFORCE/EDUCATION GOALS INTO THEIR RE-HOUSING PLANS THROUGH THE P.O.W.E.R. PROGRAM

6% DECREASE IN HOMELESS FAMILIES IN WORCESTER COUNTY

8,100 HOUSEHOLDS WERE ASSISTED BY THE HOUSING COUNSELING PROGRAM

238 FAMILIES HOUSED OUT OF SHELTER

596 HOMEOWNERS ASSISTED BY THE ELDER HOME REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

1,227 INDIVIDUALS ASSISTED BY THE DONATIONS CLEARINGHOUSE

CMHA works with area high schools to increase students’ knowledge of current issues in the community and work collectively to explore real solutions that they can initiate within their schools and neighborhoods. In FY 18 the Greater Worcester Community Foundation recognized a high school senior who received GWCF’s Scholarship for her outstanding leadership and tireless efforts in addressing and raising awareness about homelessness in our community and her school community. We are thankful for the support of Hanover Insurance Foundation, UNUM, Joseph D. Early Jr. Worcester District Attorney, and the Worcester Public Schools for their support for the “Visions of Change” Youth Summit for the youth in our community. Area high schools who participate include Abby Kelley Foster High School, Burncoat High School, Claremont Academy, Doherty Memorial High School, Holy Name CCHS, Millbury High School, North High School, Notre Dame Academy, St. Peter Marian CCHS, South High Community School, University Park Campus School, and Worcester Technical High School. Throughout the school year, these schools hold winter coat drives, hat and mitten drives, collected over $1,300.00 from the dihes for diapers campaign, school supplies and book drives, participation in the WALK for the Homeless and the distribution of over 104 bags of Halloween goodies to the children in shelters. Some students held arts and crafts activities at local shelters. YAH plants a seed for young people to become active and involved citizens in the betterment of their community.

Hope for Housing

Hope for Housing (HFH) is a partnership developed with the Interfaith Coalition to Prevent Family Homelessness and CMHA. HFH raises community awareness and utilizes the collective buying power of congregations to prevent family homelessness. Currently 29 Worcester area congregations partner with local retailers who donated 3-10% of all sales to CMHA’s HFH homelessness prevention funds. In FY 2018, $27,000 was distributed to families for homelessness prevention service. Since its inception, HFH has distributed $319,595.77 in addition to providing homeless prevention support. HFH also increases awareness, understanding and advocacy around the issues of homelessness amongst the 29 participating congregations.

P.O.W.E.R. (Personal Opportunities for Work, Education, and Renewal)

POWER ensures that all adults in the family shelter system have access to workforce development and continuing education services that lead to stability in both the short and long term. As a program of inclusion rather than exclusion, POWER accepts all individuals interested in participation and works with many who are not eligible for many workforce programs.
POWER is a comprehensive, holistic, and collaborative program that provides workforce and educational development services through intensive individual coaching, workforce readiness classes, coordination with community partners, access to supportive resources, and development of a social support system. POWER works with and supports participants move toward family stability through establishing career and education goals and pathways. With the goal of stopping the cycle of family homelessness, POWER creates a seamless system of support in collaboration with the program participant, their housing case manager and community resource providers.

This year 50 adults received comprehensive assessments that integrate workforce/education goals into their re-housing plans. 36 individuals enrolled in POWER and received either classroom or individual supports with 10 obtaining jobs, 12 having a community internship and 4 enrolling in job-specific certificate programs. An additional 57 individuals ready to return to work immediately were referred to the CMHA/WCAC partner program, Secure Jobs Initiative.

Family Emergency Shelter and the HomeBase Program
CMHA provided emergency shelter services to 379 families in the past fiscal year and housed 238 families from shelter utilizing stat HomeBASE flexible assistance resources and through working with local housing authorities and private landlords. This coordinated Rapid Re-Housing Strategy has proven to be a critical piece in reducing the costs of housing families in emergency shelter for long stays and to eliminating the practice of housing families in hotels. The resources allow families to quickly move to sustainable housing with follow up case management and supportive services. 238 families were successfully housed out of shelter with this resource in FY 2018. The average assistance per family of $5,000 makes good fiscal and moral sense in preventing families from languishing in shelter for 6 months at a cost of $3,000 per month with an average shelter stay of 6 months.

Elder Home Repair & Maintenance
The program coordinates closely with partners in the Elder Service and Health Care Network to allow elder homeowners to remain living independently in their own homes through providing repairs and routine maintenance to keep elders safely and independently housed while preventing long and costly institutional stays. 596 unduplicated senior homeowners were served in FY 2018. The program promotes healthy independent living for senior homeowners through a strong network and partnership of elder care agencies, health care providers and councils on aging. The program is critical for hundreds of senior homeowners and works to protect their safety and quality of life as well as protecting valuable affordable housing stock for the long term.

Housing Counseling and Homelessness Prevention
Housing Counseling is the longest standing and highest volume CMHA program as the point of entry for those facing a housing crisis and saw over 8,100 clients in the past year. Rooted in a prevention first model, the program provides counseling, education, and mediation to tenants and landlords as to their rights and responsibilities. Community resources, state and local prevention funds, and other resources are brought together in a holistic approach to address issues that place families at risk of homelessness. Mediation and problem solving is used to resolve housing issues and homeless prevention assistance is made available where the intervention will lead to housing stability. A total of $500,000 in prevention resources were distributed in 2018 to prevent homelessness for 283 households consisting of 408 children. A total of 8,398 individuals were seen by the program in 2017. An average intervention cost of $1,700 prevented these households from entering shelter at a cost of $3,000 per month with an average shelter stay of 6 months. Homelessness prevention is the most cost effective and best approach for families to achieve income and housing stability.

Aid to Puerto Rico Storm Evacuees
The Donations Clearinghouse (DCH) provides an extraordinary service to families and individuals who have lost their homes and belongings, and are ready to begin anew. The program gathers reusable furniture and home goods from residents of Worcester County who no longer have a use for them, and offers them, free of charge, to those who need them desperately. Rotmans Furniture and Carpet Store is a key partner in providing this service, as are local churches and businesses who hold drives and perform service projects throughout the year. In FY 2018, the DCH assisted 1,227 individuals in 471 households referred by 70 area agencies. 687 Worcester area residents donated 2,229 items to help families make a fresh start and make a house a place to call home. We thank our partners who held drives for furniture and household goods, and lent their time and talent at the warehouse to repair and ready donated items:

- Ayer Recycling Committee
- National Grid
- People’s United Bank
- St. James Parish of Grafton
- St. Mary’s Parish of Shrewsbury
- St. Peter-Marian Jr/Sr High School
- St. Michael’s on the Heights of Worcester
- United Way of Central MA
- Unum
- Worcester Regional Association of Realtors
Thank you for making our 33rd Annual WALK for the Homeless a great success! With your help we raised $111,955 in cash and received in-kind donations valued at $24,440. Nearly 80% of the proceeds raised went to vital programs in our community, including CMHA, Friendly House and the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN), St. John’s Food for the Poor Program and Hope for Housing (HFH). A big thank you goes out to our co-chairs, Father John Madden of St. John’s Parish and Kevin O’Sullivan for their dedication, support and enthusiasm.

Save the date, Sunday May 19th for the 34th Annual WALK for the Homeless. Contact Amelia Peloquin for more information at apeloquin@cmhaonline.org

$136,395 raised

Photo by Joe Santa Maria - Kill the Ball Media
A snapshot of families we serve through homelessness prevention funds:

### Head of Household
- Female: 83.5%
- Male: 16.5%
- Average Age: 38
- Employed: 48.2%
- Disabled: 27.0%
- Average gross annual income: $21,000

### Marital Status (%)
- Single: 54.8%
- Married: 14.1%
- Domestic Partnership: 11.3%
- Separated: 8.1%
- Divorced: 7.8%
- Widowed: 3.9%

### Education (%)
- High School or GED: 49.1%
- Did Not Complete High School: 21.9%
- Some College: 18.4%
- College Degree: 8.5%
- Certificate: 2.1%

### Ethnicity (%)
- Hispanic: 64.2%
- White: 21.6%
- African American / Black: 13.1%
- Other: 0.7%
- American Indian: 0.4%

### Household Locations
- North County: 13
- South County: 22
- Worcester Area: 247
- Other: 1
- # of Housing Subsidies: 107

### Average Family Size: 2.8
### Households with Children: 86.2%
### Single Parent Household: 47.2%

Thank you to our supporters:

- Alternative Technology
- Bay State Savings Bank
- Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging
- Charter TV 3
- Chuck and Mud Band
- City of Worcester Division of Neighborhoods and Housing Development
- Coney Island Hot Dogs
- Cornerstone Bank
- CVS Health
- The Diocese of Worcester
- Elder Services of Worcester Area
- City of Worcester Division of Elder Affairs
- Fallon Community Health Plan
- Francis Asbury Palmer Fund
- George F. & Sybil H. Fuller Foundation
- Greater Worcester Community Foundation
- Hoche Scafield Foundation
- Imperial Distributors
- Kill the Ball Media, Joe Santa Maria
- Price Chopper/The Golub Foundation
- The Hanover Insurance Group
- Laura G. McNaughton
- MA Association of Realtors
- Metso Automation
- Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development
- MLS/Property Information Network, Inc.
- People's United Bank
- Planting the Seed Foundation
- Polar Beverages
- Rainbow Furniture
- Reliant Medical Group
- ReMax Vision
- Rotmans Furniture and Carpet Store
- Saint Gabriel the Archangel Parish
- Saint-Gobain Abrasives, Inc.
- South High Community School
- The Stoddard Foundation
- TJX Foundation
- United Way of Central Massachusetts
- Unibank
- Unum
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- WCAC
- WCVB Channel 5 TV
- Webster Five Cents Savings Bank Foundation
- Worcester Area Mission Society
- Worcester County Management Company
- Worcester Community Action Council
- Worcester Magazine
- All Saint's Episcopal Church
- Belmont AME Zion Church
- Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
- Christ Episcopal Church
- Christ the King Catholic Church
- Epworth United Methodist Church
- First Baptist Church of Holden
- First Baptist Church of Worcester
- First Church of Sterling
- First Congregational Church of Shrewsbury
- First Congregational Church of West Boylston
- First Congregational Church of Worcester
- First Parish Church of Berlin
- Greendale People's Church
- Immaculate Conception
- Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church
- Our Lady of the Rosary
- Paxton Congregational Church
- St. Columba Catholic Parish
- St. Francis Episcopal Church Holden
- St. George's Catholic Church
- St. John's Church Worcester
- St. Luke's Episcopal Church
- St. Luke's Episcopal-Hudson
- St. Mary's Catholic Church
- Trinity Church Northborough
- Trinity Lutheran Church
- United Congregational Church
- Wesley United Methodist Church

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