STAFF

Executive Director,
Grace K. Carmark
Assistant Executive Director,
Ann Gibbons Smith
Administrative Assistant,
Nydia Febo
Controller,
Mary Daly
Accounting,
Kathryn Kimball
Office Assistant,
Connie Stewart
HMIS,
Patrick Mahoney, Coordinator
Walter Spencer, Training Coordinator
NeighborWorks Homeownership Center,
Rosa Salas
Coordinator of Public Education and Advocacy,
Danielle LaRiviere
Continuum of Care Contract Manager,
James Cruickshank
Program Development,
Kate Kerr
Elder Home Repair & Maintenance,
R. Sam Niford-Director
Mike Cahill
Donations Clearinghouse,
Jessica Cox Valade, Director
Anthony Spangler
Enrique Villaronga
Housing Counseling,
Noemi Martinez, Director of Housing Counseling
Lubjana Bacova
Miurka Torres
Housing Service Specialist,
Pat Connors
Housing Assistance Program,
Kelly Filock, Director of HomeBASE and Scattered Shelter
Jude Kamari, Director of Scattered site Housing
Jane Wangari, Director of Housing Placement
Home Base and Stabilization Case Managers
Caress Burrell
Ruth Carrion-Febo
Pam Easter
Yesica Rodriguez
Patrick Smith
Mary Turner
Shelter,
Lynn Millette, Director of Congregate Shelter
Bethzaida Rodriguez, Assistant Director
Shelter Case Management & Stabilization
Deb Spangler, Hotel & Shelter Stabilization Supervisor
Leo Cintron
Virginia Kaba
Jackson Mejia
Juana Nova
Jesus Mejia
Valerie Quaye
Maura Flanagan
Maria Trepanier
Ryan McSheehy
Ruben Ramos
Nicole Amoaka-Atta
Sonja Averett
Barbara Duda
Emila Ibanez
Arben Jahja
Paula LaBlanc
Carmen Melendez
Carlos Ortiz
Salvatore Simone III
Mark Trepanier
Nanci Wilson
Workforce Development, P.O.W.E.R Program
Patty O’Leary, Program Director
Alexandra Kartheiser, Case Manager

CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS HOUSING ALLIANCE

2013 Annual Report

CMHA
6 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609
Phone: 508-791-7265 • Fax: 508-752-5009
www.cmhaonline.org
A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends, and Supporters,

Upon writing the CMHA annual progress report, I am reminded that I celebrated my twenty year anniversary with the Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance in November of 2013. My roots in this agency and work sprung from my role as a community organizer in the late 1970’s in Worcester. As time progressed, I increasingly saw that the gap between the cost of housing and the average wages for low to moderate income households was the most critical issue dividing those who could maintain their housing and those who could not and that is when and why I joined the staff at what is now the Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance.

I am more committed than ever that the strategies of focusing on prevention resources; offering supports for employment and education; enhancing life skills and other tools for families to move to a path out of poverty will ensure that we win this battle.
CMHA has learned many lessons over the years and has played a leadership role in our county and across the state and nation in leading new responses to ending family homelessness. We applaud our staff and the staff at all of our partner agencies for working with us to move forward collectively with great success in moving homeless and at risk families and individuals to permanent, acceptable, safe housing in a truly housing first model.

After twenty years, I am more convinced than ever that the answer and the solution is within our reach. I am heartened by the ongoing support we receive in reducing and ultimately ending homelessness from a wonderful convergence of partners from all sectors of the community. I thank all of our supporters, partners and friends for all you do to support our mission to ensure that all families at risk receive the needed supports and that families are assisted to access safe and quality housing quickly.

We all walk a common path with a mutual goal that recognizes the importance of a safe home for each family that builds and supports a vibrant and safe neighborhood, school system and community going forward. Please stay on that path in the coming year and understand we can see change working with one family at a time.

My very best,

Grace
Housing Counseling and Homelessness Prevention Services

CMHA’s Housing Counseling Program provides assistance to tenants and landlords to stabilize tenancies through mediation, individual counseling and education on landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities. Housing Counseling provides emergency payments including rental and utility arrearages as well as a range of other needs to promote long-term housing stability for families and individuals as funds are available. The program also mediates housing problems between landlords and tenants that do not require cash assistance. Services are available to all with no income restrictions. WALK In Counseling is available Monday and Friday from 1:00-3:30 pm; Wednesday from 9:00 to 11:00am and Thursday from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Appointments can also be scheduled for Housing Counseling. CMHA provides group Housing Rights and Responsibilities Trainings throughout the year.

In FY’13 more than 8,099 Households were assisted through the Housing Counseling program. A total of 308 Households were assisted with Prevention Funds and the average grant was $1,346.

HOPE FOR HOUSING (HFH)

HFH is an Interfaith Coalition of 29 congregations dedicated to preventing family homelessness in Worcester County. HFH purchases food cards in bulk from Big Y, CVS, Hannaford, Shaws, and Stop & Shop. Cards are sold after services. The participating stores donate a percentage of the sales to the HFH program, these funds are used to prevent family homelessness. CMHA assesses families to ensure that prevention funds will lead to stability and is responsible for administering the distribution of funds to prevent family homelessness.

In FY 13 HFH distributed $40,188.40 to 74 families and the average prevention intervention was $543.09. Since the inception of the program in 2006; we have distributed $195,000 of homeless prevention funds.
viation of participants to strengthen their education and job skills. This program develops individualized plans for each participant based on their own career goals and self-identified barriers. This is accomplished through comprehensive case management and stabilization services; referrals to support agencies; and by creating opportunities to expand professional experience. P.O.W.E.R, adopts a holistic approach, drawing out the best in each participant to advance them toward economic stability.

If FY 13 P.O.W.E.R assisted 41 individuals in workforce and educational development

**THE ANNUAL WALK FDR THE HOMELESS**

This signature event of CMHA raises awareness about Housing and the needs of homeless and at-risk households throughout Worcester County, and provides financial support to combat homelessness. Last year we included a 5k run and raised over $144,000, cash and in-kind donations to aid families who are in need of housing assistance. Over 1,000 WALKERS and 144 registered runners participated. Save the date for the 29th Annual WALK/Run for the Homeless. Sunday May 18, 2014.

**YOUTH AGAINST HOMELESSNESS (yah)**

YAH is a dynamic organization founded in 2007. YAH is made up of teenagers from local public, private and Catholic High Schools in Worcester County. Our mission is to raise awareness in the community about homelessness and provide a vehicle for all students in Worcester to take an active role in the community by concentrating on education, advocacy, and community service. Students learn the importance of engaging in advocacy, organizing, and the importance of giving back to the community through service. The 2nd Annual Visions of Change Youth Summit

- 6 million dollars of low/moderate mortgage loans facilitated
- 233 of Households participating in Post Purchase Workshops
- Over the last three years 40% of those counseled have positive outcomes

**ELDER HDME REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE**

Minor home repairs that threaten the health and safety of elder homeowners in Worcester and Southern Worcester County are provided by CMHA experienced licensed contractors. Repairs are done with no charge for labor for senior homeowners. Recipients pay for materials only. The program prioritizes the correction of health and safety concerns that allow elders to remain living independently in their homes; while protecting valuable housing stock for the future and promoting neighborhood stability. Routine maintenance such as snow removal, yard work and gutter cleaning for elder homeowners is provided to frail and low income elders to assist the elder homeowner and to ensure that essential services such as Meals on Wheels and Visiting Nurses can continue to provide services.

FY’13, 330 Elder Homeowners were assisted through the Elder Home Repair and Maintenance Services.

**DDNATIDNS CLEARING-HHOUSE**

The Donations Clearinghouse (DCH) provides quality gently used/pre-owned furniture and household goods to families and individuals most in need, including but not limited to: elders at risk, families and individuals leaving shelter and victims of fire, flood or domestic violence. Items are collected from donors throughout Worcester County, many of whom heard of the DCH via the Rotmans Furniture Exchange Program. The items are distributed, free of charge, to families and individuals who were referred to the DCH by local social service agencies. Furniture and Household goods drives are sponsored throughout the County by faith congregations and local business to assist in supporting the
supply available for those in need of assistance.

In FY ’12- ’13, 570 unduplicated households made up of 1647 individuals received furniture and household goods to make a fresh start. More than 680 Worcester County residents generously donated 2178 items to help make a house a home. Recipients of the Donations Clearinghouse were referred by 60 local shelters, neighborhood center and social service agencies.

PUBLIC EDUCATION, ADVOCACY AND ORGANIZING

This program is at the heart of CMHA’s mission and weaves together the delivery of quality services to homeless and those at risk of homelessness within a larger advocacy agenda striving to get to the root causes of homelessness in order to promote solutions that reduce the need for on-going services. The PE&A program supports and promotes ongoing and new community wide collaborations to best meet our goals of reducing family and individual homelessness. This program coordinates providers across Worcester County in an integrated manner in designing programs and measuring outcomes of their impact for best practice solutions to meet the needs of homeless individuals and families within our community. Yearly, over 500 representatives from community agencies, private citizens and service providers participate in monthly Continuum of Care and Housing Homeless and Benefit meetings. The program promotes community awareness to support best practices in serving homeless, near homeless, or at-risk households. PE&A leads the coordination of the Continuum of Care in Worcester County including submission of the annual McKinney Grant to HUD to fund Homeless Services and Shelter across the county which results in an average level of $6 million in funding for programs throughout the county.

THE VILLAGE & IVES STREET FAMILY SHELTER

The Village is an apartment based family shelter program, and Ives Street is a congregate shelter, both provide short-term housing, employment training, housing search and other education programming and services to assist displaced families transition to self-sufficiency. The Village and Ives Street are innovative programs that embrace a strength-based approach in working with families to achieve financial independence and residential stability.

In FY 13 the Village Served 107 families and successfully moved 34 families from shelter to housing.

CMHA opened the Ives Program in February 2013. Thirteen families were served through June 2013 and of those families, five were placed into affordable and sustainable housing.

MAIN STREET & SCATTERED SITE

CMHA opened Main Street in May 2013. Thirty nine families were served through June 2013 and ten families were served from our Scattered Site Shelter.

HDMEBASE

The HomeBASE program provides, housing placement, housing search and stabilization services to families in State funded shelter in Worcester. CMHA’s philosophy in working with families to move from shelter to stable housing is based on a strength-based approach that works with one family at a time to empower families and assist them to attain the tools needed to achieve self-sufficiency.

FY’13 CMHA HomeBASE assisted 336 families in obtaining or retaining safe, affordable long-term housing.

PERSONAL, OPPORTUNITIES, WORK, EDUCATION, AND RENEWAL (P.O.W.E.R.)

Personal, Opportunities, Work, Education and Renewal, is an education and workforce development program specifically designed for homeless families living in transitional housing in which individuals work with a mentor toward their path toward self-sufficiency. P.O.W.E.R fills a gap by adopting a long term model of mentorship in order to be part of transforming the lives of participants. The program builds upon the commitment and moti-