

January 2019



REACH News

Funding REACH Home

REACH Advocacy would like to extend a huge thank you to all the community members who have donated in-kind items to keep our guests comfortable as well as those who gave monetary grants and donations. We are a completely non-profit organization and depend on the generosity of the community. Consistently over the last three years, your willingness to give in so many ways have been amazing! We would like to acknowledge all of you by name, but as we have not gotten your permission to do so on this public media, we are simply saying thank you and you know who you are!



We would like to acknowledge the financial support of many churches and organizations who have contributed more than \$200 for this current year. They are:

Canandaigua National Community Foundation/CNB Wealth Management
Henrietta United Church of Christ
St. George Episcopal Church
St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene Episcopal Church
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
St. Thomas Episcopal Church
The Caswood Group

The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany
Trinity Episcopal Church
The Parish of St. Martin De Porres

Between November 2018 when we began setting up REACH Home for this season and December 31, 2018, we have raised \$17,497.00 in donations. This is amazing to us, but it costs close to \$3,000 a week to maintain our shelter. ***We are running very close to the line and without continued monetary and in-kind donations can only survive for another few weeks.*** If you haven't had a chance to donate yet this season, please consider a donation of any size. Every dollar helps! Thank you for your support.

All gifts are tax deductible. Checks should be made out to FLACE - REACH Advocacy, and mailed to REACH Advocacy, P.O. Box 10845, Rochester, NY 14610 or you may give through our bank by clicking here: [DONATIONS](#) When prompted please choose REACH Advocacy from the list of organizations.

Please help us by spreading this request for funding among your friends and organizations to which you belong. Thank you!

DONATIONS IN KIND NEEDED:

We can always use:

- Bath Towels.
- Laundry detergent pods..
- Creamer and sugar
- Peanut butter and jelly.
- Durable men's pants. *Please do not send us any other used clothing, our supply is now very full.*

Donors may also wish to go to our links to these two vendors to see our wish lists [Walmart](#) and [Amazon](#). And check our [Facebook](#) page for regular updates.



Thanks to Bishop Kearney students who helped to organize our clothing store room.



Guest Gift boxes for their new permanent home.

We are putting together gift boxes as our guests succeed in securing their own permanent place of residence. These boxes contain items to assist them as they begin to take care of their own homes. We would love to get donations of the following items to put in these boxes:

- plastic dishes, bowls, and cups
- utensils
- pots and pans
- shower curtains and hooks
- stackable food storage containers, etc.

Evening Meals - Please go to our [Web Page](#) and sign up. Current number of openings for the remaining months are:

- January. 1
- February. 8
- March. 21
- April 10



A big THANK YOU to all who help in this way. Our guests experience this as a real sense of community time and care.

Staff Notes:

Lulu Christ, our Assistant Manager has decided to leave REACH Home for personal reasons. We wish her well and thank her for the good work she has done for REACH and our guests.

Oscar Brewer, has been appointed as Assistant Manager on the recommendation of our Home Manager, Evelyn Penn. Oscar has had many years of experience in working with homeless men and women and has been a member of the REACH Team for the past two years.

We are currently seeking a second Assistant Manager to help with guest appointments, rides, and DHS paper work.

We have created a new position of Shift Leader and appointed Karee McGill and Reggie Brockington to these positions.

REACH Home is blessed with our dedicated staff.

Meet a member of our Staff:

Wanda Minor. Grew up in rural New York. Both of her parents were farmers. She looks back on this early part of her life as isolated and lonely. She went to culinary school and came to Rochester where she worked as a cook and/or a restaurant manager for twenty years. She has two daughters, Amanda and Chrystal, and three grandchildren, Brooke, Brittany, and Briana.



At some point in her life she became addicted and this lasted for ten years. In recovery she decided that she wanted to help others. She became a Catholic Worker at St. Joseph's Community Center and then a residential staff member in Legacy House on Dewey Avenue. She really enjoyed this work. However, at some point the work became too demanding and she suffered a heart attack in June of last year.

She continued to look for ways to serve the homeless and began to work with Michael Gill at Peace Village. Mike invited her to consider coming on the staff of REACH Home and she did and is now a valued member of our team.

Meet one of our Guests

Vandy Gallishaw aged 52 grew up in Syracuse, NY. He has 10 siblings. Both his mother and father were hard working parents, though his mother suffered from alcoholism and separated from her husband early in their marriage. She died twenty years ago. His father is still



living, and they keep in touch. Vandy says his dad still holds him accountable for how he lives.

Vandy recalls that growing up he was given all that he needed and that his mother was a person who welcomed anyone into their home. Vandy began his own working life while in school—finding and fixing up bicycles and selling them. As a youngster he enjoyed basketball and wrestling.

In his early twenties he became addicted to cocaine. But after several years of this way of life he stopped using hard drugs when he saw too many dying from this kind of behavior. Though he continues to use alcohol and pot, he wants to be completely free of this way of living.

Vandy was married in his 30's and has a daughter, Kiera, with whom he keeps in touch. He and his family came to Rochester to pursue a career in automotive engineering. But his marriage did not prosper, and he got into the habit of drinking and "playing the streets" after work. And he was fired from his automotive job and became homeless.

Last winter he was in a group shelter and while there was mugged and beaten. He came to REACH Home, tired of this way of life. He has been a member of Mt Carmel Deliverance Church for several years. At some point he was diagnosed with bi-polar disorder. He also knows that he has an anger issue and he hopes to find a counsellor who is "street smart" to help him stay sober and deal with his anger.

The good news is that Vandy is on his way to a new beginning. Through Shelter Plus he will be leaving REACH Home this month and moving to his own apartment. Through all of his life experiences he is learning to listen more, and not to react too quickly. He says, "REACH has given me another chance. I want to drink less and be less angry." We wish him well on this new beginning.

REACH Team actions:

- We have submitted our papers to become an Incorporated Not For Profit organization with the NYS State Department.
- We continue to work with Causewave to define the role of our Board and its committees.
- We sent two questions to be considered by the Homeless Services Network Steering Committee as they prepare to have a conversation with our Mayor:

1.) Much of the recent development of housing in the city has been focused on people with good and regular income. Even when developments include accommodation for "low income" persons or families, it does so for people whose income is at %60 or more of the area median income. There are about 20,000 households living on less than 30% of the area median income. Recent actions, e.g. the closing of the Cadillac Hotel, have eroded the housing stock for the very poor. Safe affordable housing is essential for

a truly strong and compassionate community. And when we use the term “affordable” we should be including those whose income is less than 60% of the AMI. If we want to promote true diversity in our City, what plans do you or the city government have for adding much needed truly affordable housing for people in the lowest income brackets?

2.)Your mayoral campaign addressed Rochester as being a "Tale of Two Cities": one being advantaged; the other caught in poverty. Would you be willing to advocate for New York State *Finger Lakes Forward* funds devoted to a single comprehensive project

- manufacturing tiny homes
- in a new state-of-the art facility
- within a reclaimed Rochester urban brownfield area
- using a workforce acquiring Building Trades skills
- and situating the finished homes in the context of planned tiny home villages including support services?

Housing Facts

- There are about 40 eviction hearings per day in Rochester.
- There is no Housing Court Judge at present.
- Tenants do not have equal voices in the process.
- Over 30,000 in our city spend more than 70% of their income on housing.
- About 20,000 families are living on less than 30% of the Area Median Income.

We have a housing crisis in our city!

Happy New Year to all of our readers.

Thank you for your interest and support of REACH.
For more information please check out our Website at reachadvocacy.org.

