

March 2019



REACH
News

News from REACH Advocacy

As of February 11, we are now officially REACH Advocacy, Inc.! Our application to be recognized as a not-for-profit organization was granted by the New York State State Department on this date.

We are now in the process of applying to the Internal Revenue Service for a 501(c)(3) status under tax law. We will then be able to receive funds as a charitable organization. For the time being we continue to be able to receive tax exempt funds thanks to our FLACE Account at Canandaigua National Bank.

Notes from our Board

Currently we have a six member board made up of members of our REACH Team. We have been meeting with CauseWave to better understand the role of the Board and the expectations we have of Board members. We are most appreciative of the generous support given us by CauseWave, and in particular our facilitator, Mary Hadley.



The board had its first official meeting on Monday, March 4. Seated at the table from left Dan Callan, Andy Carey, Peter Peters, Jeanette Creighton, Deborah Peiffer. Absent was Kevin Aiken who is recovering from surgery, we wish him well, and Lulu Christ, who is on a leave of absence.

At this meeting the board adopted Board of Directors Member Expectations and Responsibilities that each member will sign. This document will be essential as we seek and recruit additional board members to complete our proposed twelve member board.

We also appointed the following persons to the start up Tiny Home Village Committee, Deacon Dan Callan, John Curran, Susan Maxwell, Stephen Smith, Peter and Sarah Peters. Others will join this committee as their strategic calendar unfolds.

And we established, for the time being, a regular meeting time of the REACH Advocacy Board. It will be on the first Monday of the month at 4:30 p.m.



REACH awarded \$50,000 for Tiny Home Project!

In February, REACH Advocacy, Inc. became the recipient of a \$50,000 award from the Rochester Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI) following a Participatory Budget Project. Thank you to all who voted for the REACH Tiny Home Village project!



We have now met with RMAPI and have a goal of presenting a preliminary strategic plan on how we will use the funds to create a model Tiny Home by March 25. This will be the major task of our Tiny Home Committee. In April we hope to have more news of this exciting development and a full report on the vision we have for a TINY HOME VILLAGE.



News from REACH Home 2018-19

At our last Team meeting we celebrated birthdays for our House Manager, Evelyn Penn, and one of our Team members, Jeanette Creighton.

Our Social Work team reported that we are on our way to maintaining our good record of housing approximately 40% of our guests into their own apartments.

Dan Callan will be hosting a **Work Day on Monday afternoon, March 11.** We need electrical and wall repair handy people.

We were delighted when Laurie Prizel hearing about some of our needs jumped right in and brought out a crock pot and some supplies. Laurie is the Director of Dimitri House, Inc. from whom we are renting our current home. It has been a really good year for us and we thank her for her hospitality.

Another big THANK YOU to the House of Mercy who is keeping us afloat while we await County reimbursements that have been approved.

And still another thank you to **St. Monica's church** for its Social Justice Team's Sunday Undies collection when we received:

- 251 boxer shorts for men
- 19 undershirts
- 8 pairs of men's socks

- 47 bras
- 197 ladies' briefs
- 7 pairs of ladies' socks

And thanks to **The Bug Jar** who hosted a fundraiser and gave us \$1245



REACH Home Supply Needs in March

Immediate Needs

Sugar
Shampoo
Garbage Bags
Paper towels



Regular Needs:

Food Items: Coffee, tea, cocoa, creamer, sugar, cereal, peanut butter, jelly, powdered drink mix, Ramen Noodles, snack food (evening snacks)

Household Items: Kitchen and bathroom cleaning supplies, Toilet bowl cleaner, laundry detergent pods, dishwasher detergent pods, bleach, tin foil, plastic wrap, paper napkins, paper towels, spray disinfectant (Lysol type) room deodorizers

Ice melt

Clothing: No additional clothing needed-no more storage space

Medical: Cough drops

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.



WELCOME WAGON GIFT BOXES

As we get near the closing of this season's REACH Home please help us with Guest Gift boxes for their new permanent home.

We are putting together "welcome wagon 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:

- March --- FIVE OPENINGS
- April -----SIX OPENINGS

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



Meet a member of our Staff:

Jeffrey Whitlock (59) was born in Rochester and graduated from Jefferson High School. He has spent a most of his life working in construction and currently sub-contracts for contractors in the area. He is skilled in a number of re-modeling areas.

As a young man he was a Junior Counselor at The Charles Settlement House, and later at St. Joseph's Villa where he realized that he had much to learn to assist young men who had lost their way. During this young adult phase of his life he attended Faith Temple Apostolic Church and made a deep commitment to be a follower of Jesus.

Jeffrey married in his twenties and has three grown sons and one grandson. He and his wife separated after a period marital discord and his sons, now adults, and grandson, live in Atlanta. He keeps in touch with them and is proud of them.

During this sad break up in his life he left being an active church member but is now wanting to return to church. All along he has felt deeply moved and committed to the teachings of Jesus and has tried to live by these values.

How did he get to REACH? Two years ago, he was one of the guests at Bridge Home. He was trying to get an application for Section 8 housing and met Andy Carey of McCollaborative. The problem was that his construction work was taking him from place to place and he had no place of permanent residence. He was for all practical purposes homeless. Andy encouraged him

to get to REACH and helped with his Section 8 application. He has now lived in his own place for over two years, recently moving to a place that has better property management.

When asked what he thought of REACH, Jeffrey said it "is a beautiful program that reaches out to you and helps you to do what you need to do to become more responsible for yourself." This year, he is a staff worker helping REACH continue to reach out to our homeless brothers and sisters.



Meet one of our Guests

Brandon Junious, aged 35, came to REACH Home after his girlfriend took their two daughters, Noril (2) and Niara (new born) and left him. As a result, he lost half of his rent money and found himself without the means to pay. He had a modest income as a DJ, but not enough to stay in his home.

Brandon wants to do better. He told me about his troubled life from teen years and on into young adulthood. Both of his parents were addicted to drugs. He was raised by his granddad and went to John Marshall and the School of the Arts, but in his late teens he got involved in dealing drugs. He was caught as a teenager and put on probation, but later he was caught as an adult and did some time. At the time this was easy money and gave the promise of a good life. He says he did not think about the harm he was doing, but he did see that drugs led to some bad things and that kept him from using.

At one point, Brandon lost or had stolen all of his money and jewelry. He thought that if someone takes from me, I can take from you...this resulted in him being sentenced to five years in prison. While he learned some trades in prison, he vows that he is never going back there.

REACH Home is giving him another chance. He is working with the Social Work Team and hopes very soon to be in his own apartment and find a regular job. He says that here at REACH he has met in the staff some who are really "people persons" and they are what is motivating him to change.

When told about REACH's vision of a Tiny Home Village he got quite excited and liked the idea of helping to build his "own home."

REACH Team actions and concerns:

- Peter was interviewed on WXXI after the Tiny Home award was announced. You can hear the interview by clicking [here](#).
- Please consider calling your State Senator to ask him/her to support S 02375, that will amend the social services law in relation to Home Stability Support. We work with the homeless community and believe that this bill would go a long way to reduce the number of homeless

people and in the long run will be a saving to public resources. For more information click [here](#).

Resources and Action Opportunities

- The National Low Income Housing Coalition released ***Opportunities to End Homelessness and Housing Poverty in the 116th Congress***, a memo to incoming senators and representatives on concrete steps they can take to help address one of the most critical issues facing extremely low-income families today: the lack of decent, accessible, and affordable housing. **Click here to download a copy.**
- **Stand Up for Recovery Day:** March 20, 2019. Every year, hundreds of recovery supporters gather in Albany for **Recovery Day** Flyer. This year, on March 20th, we expect to top more than 1,000 people educating decision-makers and the general public about **recovery** and more! Join us on this day of advocacy. **Click here** for more information.
- **Help to prevent homelessness.** Call your State Senator to ask him/her to support S 02375, to amend the social services law, in relation to **Home Stability Support** programs—for more information **click here**. Call soon, this bill comes before the Senate at the end of this month.

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

