

February 2020



REACH  
News

**REACH believes that HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT**

**The problem is not homeless men and women,  
but a shortage of truly affordable homes.**

## Notes from the Board

We now have a fourth committee: **REACH Development Committee**. This committee is in the exploratory stages to create long range funding streams to enable REACH to obtain its mission goals, in particular the Tiny Home Village. We thank Samra, Matt, Sarah and Susan for taking leadership in this work.



We learned from the **Shelter Committee** that they are exploring a grant to provide vocational training for our guests in future shelters.

While we have learned that the County is promising a sizable increase in the support of our emergency shelter, we still need to find donations to meet the full cost of the shelter. See more below.

We authorized the **Advocacy Committee**, should they agree, to sign REACH onto the Housing Justice for all Campaign. See more in the Advocacy section.

## Meet the Board - This month Andy Carey

I started my social work career working in an acute inpatient psychiatric unit. Many people came to the unit with housing insecurity. Then, I began to work in the community as a mental health case manager. Many of the people I served in this position also had housing insecurity. All over our community, I ran into hard-working, intelligent, service providers and community members working hard to alleviate the symptoms of poverty; including housing insecurity. While our safety net systems worked for many people, there was a large group of people that did not fit into the regular systems. That is when I decided to set out to explore changing systems. I co-founded MC Collaborative. Our agency works to make systems fit a truly person-centered service model. Rather than fitting the service to the system.



This has been a wonderful way to work. There are a lot of set-backs and

successes, but we are always moving forward by doing the next right thing. The "next right thing" is discovered by listening closely to what people are saying and treating people with dignity and respect. When you respect people, you listen to their solutions and see what can be done. REACH was a natural fit for me.

I see REACH as an amazing collaboration of a large amount of individuals, service providers, faith communities, community organizations, etc. This organization focuses on treating all people with the dignity and respect they deserve. All of REACH's innovation and advocacy is built on this foundation and that is why I feel so strongly about the efforts of REACH. I cannot articulate all that has been done in REACH's short history, but it has been amazing. I am looking forward to an amazing future for REACH and the people served by REACH.

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## Shelter Committee - REACH Home 2019-20



### Chair's Report

We are almost halfway through the REACH Shelter Season and it has been amazing. We have been serving more people than we ever have in the past. We have experienced a roughly 25% increase in the amount of guests served over our past years. This increase in our capacity to serve guests has pushed

us to hone our systems, find flexibility, and innovate. None of this would be possible without the amazing support of our community; THANK YOU

[To read more click here!](#)

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### Meet our new Day Shelter Manager

We welcome Michele Cooley as our Day House Manager. She joins Evelyn Penn to share in the day to day management of REACH Home 2019-20. Michele and Evelyn have known each other for several years. Michele is the Director of Asbury Dining and Caring Center, a position she has held for eleven years, and Evelyn has volunteered at this Center.

[To read more click here.](#)



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### Meet a REACH Home Guest



**Richelmy (Ricky) Torres.** Ricky is 37 years old is facing into the consequences of some bad choices he has made in lifetime and is now seeking to put his life together. He was born in Puerto Rico and came to New Jersey with his family aged 7, and later moved to Rochester when he was 12 years old. He went to Freddie Thomas High School. As a young man he moved to Syracuse where he lived with Haley and fathered four children, Blaine, Angelina and Adriana (twins)

and Sophia. As a result of one of his poor choices he served time in prison. But for him this was an opportunity to develop a skill and he learned how to do masonry. At some point he and Haley broke up and he lived on the street or with friends, but never a place he could call his own. It was not a good way to live and in desperation he became a user. [Click here to read more.](#)

## PLEASE CONSIDER BECOMING A REACH PARTNER

REACH Partners are an essential part of the REACH story. And we need more. Would your church, work, or community group be willing to partner with us to provide necessary supplies for the shelter? Please consider taking on one of these ideas:

**Bring an evening meal**--there are three openings in March and eleven in April. You can sign up on line [here](#). The evening meal is one of the most important ways we help to create community among our guests. If you have any questions please drop us an email. **A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE ALREADY BROUGHT MEALS TO OUR GUESTS.**



## Help with supplies

REACH is serving many more people this year and going through supplies rapidly. You can help us by providing some of our most needed items:

- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Hand sanitizer
- Laundry detergent pods
- Cereal
- Coffee
- Sugar

Your donations help us to defray some of our supply costs so that resources can be used for increased rent, utility and staffing costs.

We always need gently used winter boots for men and women, and winter coats/jackets, especially in larger sizes.

We CANNOT accept bags of used clothing as we do not have the facilities or staff to process them. Also, we are a winter shelter, so we need specific warm winter items for adults only. Thank you for your consideration!

## Donate to our funds

This year our expenses relating to the building are considerably more than in past years and we need to make up a gap in our projected budget. Please

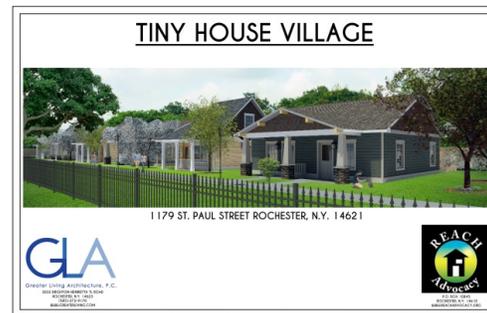
consider giving financial support to REACH. We are a 501(c)(3) organization and all gifts are tax deductible contributions. Please mail checks to REACH Advocacy, PO Box 10845, Rochester NY 14610.



## Tiny Home Committee

**From Susan Maxwell, Chair:**

We are looking forward to another exciting year as we move forward on our Tiny Home Village. We have identified and met with a Developer, Bernie Iacovangelo and have added Paul Randazesse to our Tiny Home Committee who has agreed to be our site manager. Both are willing to support us and provide the needed expertise in building our homes. February should prove to be a busy month. We will be having deep holes drilled on the property to determine the stability of the soil. If that has a positive outcome a meeting with Zoning will be held to identify the variances needed for our homes. We also will be meeting with City Utilities to determine what requirements we need to address for us to move forward with building our tiny homes. As you are aware City Real Estate is requiring that we have the total cost of this project in hand before they will allow us to purchase city property. We have begun to work with the REACH Development team to plan and design a major Capital Campaign for our Tiny Home Village. We will need your support to make this campaign a success. There is a saying that "The distance between dreams and reality is called action". Contact us to find out what actions you can take to make our dream of a Tiny Home Village a reality in 2020.



## Advocacy Committee

The committee has now met twice. We are meeting at the Fr. Tracy Wellness Center on North Clinton, hosted by Rudy Rivera. We are focusing on the issue of the use of sanctions by DHS. All of us have read the paper by Dr. Harry Murray on this issue, and now will be meeting with Dr. Murray on Tuesday, February 11 at 5:30 p.m. the purpose of the meeting is to begin to address the data uncovered by Dr. Murray and come to a better understanding of who is most impacted by the current around sanctioning. We have invited representatives from the HSN Advocacy Team, The Tenants Union, and The Homeless Union to join us.



It is our hope that in the near future we will be able to collaborate with other

advocacy organizations and arrange a meeting with the County Executive and speak with him about the negative impact of the punitive aspect of sanctions on this population.

Submitted by Peter W. Peters  
Chair, pro tem.

We welcome others to join us in this work contact Peter if interested at [peterwpeters@me.com](mailto:peterwpeters@me.com).

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## Upcoming Events of interest:

- Tuesday, February 25, noon rally at the Grand Staircase, NYS Capitol Building at State St. and Washington Ave., Albany, NY for **Home Stability Support** to be included in the NYS Budget. For details [click here](#).
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## *Resources that may interest our readers:*

A book your editor is reading: Donald W. Burns & David L DiLeo (Eds), **Ending Homelessness: Why We Haven't, How We Can**, Lynne Reiner, Boulder, 2016

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Thank you for your interest and support of REACH.  
For more information please check out our Website at [reachadvocacy.org](http://reachadvocacy.org).  
and please like us on Facebook!

