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

The REACH Board was happy to hear about the ongoing development of the Tiny Home Initiative. The Tiny Home Committee remains focused and is pushing through the logistics of development. As is true of everything REACH embarks on, the Tiny Home Committee has been building great community partnerships to help accomplish the goal.

The REACH Advocacy Committee is also doing amazing work in the same manner; building the partnerships that are necessary for impactful advocacy efforts. Advocacy focused on systemic change will have a great positive impact on the people we serve. Look for more exciting opportunities to help the advocacy efforts in the near future.

The REACH Shelter Committee continues to work through the winter. It has been an amazing season of serving more people than any other year. The REACH Shelter has been doing well, but always appreciates new volunteers for the final stretch to freshen all aspects of the shelter.

The REACH Board is happy to report that all aspects of REACH Advocacy are moving forward in the manner that REACH was founded on; in partnership with many individuals and organizations of our community.

Andy Carey, Co-Chair

Meet the Board – This month Matt Alexander

Count your blessings- I believe this to be very true. I have always tried to live by giving back to the community that I live, work, and play in. From when I was in Boy Scouts and my church’s youth group as a youngster to present day, I have been
volunteering to help the less fortunate in Rochester.

My wife and I are teaching our daughter to grow up this way as well. I was approached by Peter and Andy to join the board in the fall of 2019 and jumped at the opportunity. Rochester's housing system does not meet the needs of less fortunate citizens. If they don't have anyone advocating and assisting them to address this chronic problem how are they to begin to improve themselves. I look forward to assisting REACH achieve their dream of a Tiny Home Village and changing the public's perception of homelessness in Rochester.

Shelter Committee - REACH Home 2019-20

Chair's Report

Learn. about how our shelter is practicing stewardship of this planet earth.
To read more click here!

Meet our REACH Home Staff - Robert Paul Spall

Robert Paul Spall, Jr. (55) grew up in Rochester, mostly around the Monroe Ave area. He has experience life in the cross hairs of racial identity—his mother was white and his father black and was never around as Robert grew up. At one point he was adopted by his Caucasian stepfather, but then lost contact. In his early childhood he was placed in foster care due to his mother's drinking habits. At this time, he attended Blessed Sacrament Church and school. He has fond memories of this time of his life and speaks of the important educational role his elementary schooling gave him.
To read more click here.

Meet a REACH Home Guest

Maribel Velez (39) came to the US from Yaucea, Puerto Rico in December 2018. She and her husband had decided to divorce, and she came to stay with her older brother who lives in Rochester. Maribel has minimal English language facility and so Ricky Torres acted as the interpreter for this interview. Thank you, Ricky!
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:

- Cereal
- Coffee
- Powdered drink mix
- Sugar
- Trash bags—13 gallon and 33 gallon
- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Hand sanitizer
- Laundry pods

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

**Please note that we can no longer take in clothing items.** Our clothing room is now full and as the shelter will close next month we have sufficient for our guests needs at present. **Thank you to all who have donated this winter.**

**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:

Our Tiny Home Committee is very active as we continue to work toward the creation of a Tiny Home Village. To see the bullet points submitted to the board please [click here](#). As you will see progress is being made, and while we have many challenges we have a great team working on this project.

Advocacy Committee

Our committee continues to look for opportunities to collaborate with others seeking housing justice. Here are two items we are working on:

- We are collaborating with the Homeless Services Network Advocacy Committee to discover what each agency finds that hinders their ability to meet the needs of those who come into their shelter.

- We suspect that high on this list will be the current use of sanctions over this population. We continue to work on meeting with the current administration for a serious conversation on this issue.

We invite the readers of this newsletter to take action on bills before Congress and NYS Assembly that will help to promote housing security.

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.

Action Requests

Please join the campaign of support for the Home Stability Support bill now making it’s way through the state legislature. Ask Governor Cuomo to sign the bill this year. To sign on [click here](#). This is a proven way to lower the number of people who become housing deprived.

On the Federal level, please consider writing your elected officials in support of two bills before the US Senate that would help families at risk of becoming housing deprived. [Click here](#) for more information.

Upcoming Events of interest:

[Image 320x626 to 521x749]
[Image 324x623 to 328x627]
[Image 371x445 to 521x537]
[Image 375x442 to 379x446]
[Image 303x588 to 307x589]
[Image 303x68 to 307x68]
Spring cleaning opportunity – Please consider asking your faith community to host a Coat Box this coming spring to collect warm coats for the homeless to be distributed at the PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT ROCHESTER this coming Fall. If your faith community is willing to host a Coat Box please call Briana Parker at 585-315-8474 (cell) or 585-368-3726 (work).

June 20 Poor Peoples’ March on Washington. For bus information click here.

Resources that may interest our readers:

HOUSING FIRST. As reported in The Christian Science Monitor, November 18, and noted in the Christian Century, December 18, "Houston TX has decreased homelessness by 54% since 2011 and has virtually eliminated homelessness among veterans. The achievement took a citywide effort involving cooperation and better communication between federal agencies, city government, not-for-profits, and businesses. More than 4,300 permanent housing units were developed to house 17,000 people. Adopting a "housing first" approach, in which other social service needs aren’t addressed until permanent housing is found, has also contributed to the success." REACH and many others in Rochester are committed to this Housing First principle.

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