

April 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.**

Breaking News

- **Due to the current COVID 19 epidemic REACH Home Shelter will remain open until April 30.** During this extended time our social work team is making every effort to secure safe housing for our guests. Please see the Shelter Report for more details.
- **REACH is looking for an Intern:**



Samra Brouk

Job Title: Development Intern

Job Description: REACH is looking for an intern to assist us in our efforts to house the housing deprived in our community. As we address chronic homelessness in our community we know that the availability of permanent, affordable, housing is critical. The Development intern will assist the REACH board in identifying local and national sources of funding for our future Tiny Home project.

Job Duties: Research potential donors, Vet funding opportunities

Experience Gained: Intern will work closely with the REACH Development Committee, which collectively has 25+ years of experience in the non-profit sector. Intern will learn how to conduct strategic research, working toward the end goal of securing funds for the Tiny Home project. Other skills include navigation of google suite, fundraising strategy, strategic communications, research briefs.

Email resumes to: samrabrouk@gmail.com

Editor's Notes

Most of us have never lived in the face of this kind of world crisis. We are in a kind of collective shock as we witness the unrelentina presence of this viral illness and at the same time moved by the couraae and humane care that so many are offering. As so many are saying "we are in this together."

Perhaps it is this profoundly basic sense of what it means to be human that will be

the most memorable part of this pandemic. So many kind gestures, humorous sharing from safe distances, collective sewing circles, meal and food distribution, calls to homebound and so on remind us that we are indeed in this together.

REACH has had many expressions of support and concern as we continue our mission to care for and house the housing deprived. We are most thankful for all of these expressions of concern.

At a virtual church service this prayer expressed for me some of the values that we at REACH cherish in the face of this tragic period:

May we who are merely inconvenienced, remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.

May those who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May those who have the flexibility to care for our children when schools close remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel a trip remember those who have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market remember those who have no margin at all.

May those who settle for quarantine at home remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country, let us choose love during this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us find ways to be the loving embrace to God and our neighbor. ([Prayer for the Pandemic](#) By: Cameron Wiggins Bellm)

We are in this together!

Peter W. Peters

Notes from the Board



- We each had a new experience holding a virtual meeting using ZOOM!
- We received a letter of resignation from The Rev. Marlowe Washington. We sorry to see him go and will miss his contribution to our conversations. Kevin, Rudy and Peter will search for a replacement.
- We agreed that due to the current COVID 19 epidemic REACH Home Shelter will remain open until at least April 30 if staffing issues can be resolved.
- We asked Larry, Rudy, and Dan to explore the acquisition of a house on Avenue A that will serve as a combination Tiny Home Village Manager's dwelling, a community gathering place, and offices for support staff.
- We discussed plans for a capital funds drive. We are looking for an intern to assist in data gathering- see announcement below.
- Andy and Dan were thanked for the many extra hours they and the staff are now working at REACH Home with the new COVID 19 protocols.

Meet the Board - This month Larry Knox

Larry Knox is currently the Political and Community

Engagement Coordinator for 1199SEIU. He was previously the Regional Campaign staffer for the Barack Obama campaign in 2008 and the WNY staffer for Organizing for America after the election. Larry has worked as a Legislative Staffer in the Monroe County Legislature and for Assemblymembers Susan John and David Gantt. He's worked as a Political Organizer on Local, State and Presidential Campaigns and started his Union Organizing career working with Daycare providers for CSEA.



Born in Chicago Illinois, Knox moved with his parents to the Rochester area in High School. He has lived in the City since college. Now married with four daughters, Larry and his wife Zayhia who is a Musician, have been committed to addressing systems of inequity while empowering residents to have a voice in their job and community.

Larry is a former Board Member of Citizen Action and Metro Justice and serves on the Policy Committee of the Rochester Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative. He also co-chairs the Roc/Acts Jobs and Poverty task force. He was recently appointed to the Region's Census Advisory Committee. Prior to joining 1199SEIU he worked briefly as a White House Associate in the Office of Presidential Personnel.

Larry believes in the mission of REACH and feels that all of our citizens should be given every opportunity to live safely and that our society has a duty to better use its resources and space to ensure this happens. He first found out about REACH thru Peter Peters talking about the work at many Roc/Acts Jobs and Poverty task force meetings.

Shelter Committee - REACH Home 2019-20

Chair's Report

In his report Andy describes the challenges facing REACH Home in the face of COVID 19 and the protocols that have been put in place. He expresses his thanks for all who have made the continuing operation of this foundational work of REACH and ends by saying, "Our ability to persist in the face of adversity has shown the strength of our purpose and our dedication to the people we serve. The shelter and its collaboration with other community organizations has been a light in a storm."

[To read the full report click here!](#)

Meet our REACH Home Staff - Beth Ranches

Beth (54) grew up in Greece and is the youngest of four sisters. She attended Greece Athena HS and was a gifted athlete and named Athlete of the Year during her time there. But she also had time to assist in coaching and supported other abled students in her school. From High School she went to Canisius College hoping to major in Physical Education and Physical



Therapy but at this time she was diagnosed with MS and had to leave the program.

[To read more click here.](#)

Meet a REACH Home Guest



Eduardo Comendador (33) was born in Puerto Rico where his father has a business in construction and cement work. In addition, his father loves to break in horses. At an early age Eduardo's mother separated from his father in order to bring her nine children to the US for better educational opportunities. He has a lot of family in the US and went to school in Olean and Clinton NY, and while he did not graduate, he has obtained a General Education Diploma. At one point he attended BOCES and studied Interior Design. He has spent much of his working life so far doing odd jobs, roofing, and caring for his neighbor when he was in home hospice.

[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--Now that we will remain open until April 30 there will be more slots available. By the time this Newsletter is published the additional slots will be listed. Please consider signing up. [Click here](#) to sign up. **A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE ALREADY BROUGHT MEALS TO OUR GUESTS.**



Donate to our funds

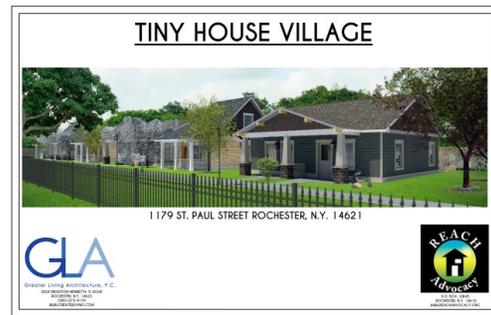
Every year we assist many guests into permanent housing and assist them with deposits and moving expenses. In previous years we have been able to place 40% or more of our guests into permanent housing and we need the funds to make this happen. Please consider giving financial support to REACH. If you are in a position of not needing the Rebate under the CARES Act, consider donating this to REACH as we assist men and women into permanent housing. 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:

This past month forward progress with the Tiny Home Village has been somewhat slowed due to Covid 19. We did submit the required MOU (memorandum of understanding) to RMAPI and they accepted it. This will now allow us to begin to access the awarded grant money. The MOU between REACH and City Roots Land Trust remains under review with attorneys from both organizations. Anticipated completion for this MOU is early April. To read the full report [click here](#).



Advocacy Committee

As we now know the HSS bill did not make this year's NYS budget. Thanks to all who lobbied for this bill. We will continue to monitor and promote opportunities to support similar bills in the future. Too many people become housing vulnerable because of the lack of significant eviction mitigation programs. To read the full report and to learn of **Action Requests** [click here](#).



We welcome others to join us in this work contact Peter if interested at peterwpeters@me.com.

Upcoming Events of interest:

- **Volunteers needed to help clean up REACH Home in May.** Please contact John Curran for more information jecurran@rochester.rr.com
- **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' Virtual March on Washington.** For more information [click here](#).

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!



