



# REACH News

January 2021

## *Housing is a Human Right*

### Notes from the Board

- We heard a presentation by Andy about MC Collaborative.
- We adopted two By-law changes, a) reducing the number of Board members who need to serve on standing committees to two(2); b) designating September as the month of our Annual Meeting.
- We welcomed two new Board Members:



**Joe Difiore** is Passionate about all things 'community',

Joe Di Fiore is active in volunteer efforts ranging from housing advocacy to community organizing to youth development. Joe firmly believes in housing as a human right, development without displacement, and community wealth building. Joe is a founding member and executive director of City Roots Community Land Trust and currently serves on the boards of the Beechwood Neighborhood Coalition, Peace Village, and the Urban League of Rochester Economic Development Corporation. Joe looks forward to contributing however he can to the important work REACH is doing here in Rochester!



**Janelle Duda-Banwar, MSW, PhD** is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at RIT and a Senior Research Associate at the Center for Public Safety Initiatives (CPSI) at RIT. Janelle graduated from Mercy High School and went on to Cincinnati and then Long Beach, CA earning her degrees in social work. She later returned to Rochester, only to leave a few years later to earn her PhD in Social Welfare from Case Western Reserve University.

Janelle has worked as an Emergency Response Children's Worker with the Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services and as a Sexual Assault Crisis Counselor. In the last decade she has taken on the role of researcher and,

Joe has travelled widely and taught English in several European countries. He grew up in Irondequoit and graduated from Eastridge High School. His college career focused on languages and linguistics. He is conversationally fluent in Italian.

Joe is married to Julia and they are the parents of Elson (71/2), Milo (5), Teo (21/2) and Terry (1 week).

Joe enjoys Judo, Brazilian Jujitsu, Skiing, and Biking.

more recently, professor. She works closely with CPSI to implement action research at the local level and continues to build robust researcher-practitioner partnerships. Janelle has partnered with local agencies including the Judicial Process Commission and Ibero-American Development Corporation to implement, track, and evaluate programs and strategies aimed at reducing barriers to reentry, violence reduction, neighborhood revitalization, and assessing fairness and justice in criminal justice processing. Janelle has taught at the college level for nearly a decade, and works closely with student Research Assistants through CPSI. She has received multiple grants to fund her work. She is excited to be joining the REACH Board to advocate for housing for everyone.

Janelle lives with her partner, Rob, and her two rescue dogs in Rochester. In her spare time, she enjoys being the best aunt in the world, gardening, cooking, and interior design.

## Shelter Committee

We are continuing our work toward REACH taking out a long term lease on 720 W. Main Street for a permanent REACH Home. We have created a vision for what this new outreach program of REACH will look like. We are excited about what this will mean for our shelter and support services to men and women who are housing deprived that we serve. To read the vision statement see the link below.



We are now well into our Outreach Zones as a way of making personal contact with housing vulnerable people on the street. In the first few months we have made connections with over 800 people. This is truly a people



centered work. We are most grateful for all of the support that the REACH community has given to this work.

[To read the full report of the shelter committee please click here.](#)

**This just in:** Andy has just published a report of the success of the collaboration between MC Collaborative, REACH, House of Mercy, and Open Door Mission. *He reports that of the 176 guests at the hotels, through the DHS COVID Placement program from April to the end of December, 94 have been housed. This exceeds the REACH standard of placement of our guests by about 10%. [To read the full report click here.](#)*

A big thanks to all who donate to our shelter program. Your generosity keeps this outreach ministry working for our guests. Each year we are able to place over 40% of our guests into permanent housing. [To make an additional donation click here](#)

## The Tiny Home Committee



- We are hard at work on our Business plan in preparation for us to apply for substantive grants and/or loans for building our Village. Our first submission will be made this month.
- Our architectural plans have been revised by Greater Living Architects to meet current code.
- We are exploring working with a Development Specialist following a conversation with the Corporation for Supportive Housing.

We are so very thankful to the **Abundance Food Co-op** who have designated REACH Advocacy as the January recipient of their **2021 Round Up Program**. Please drop by the Abundance Food Co-op to shop in this lovely market in the South

Wedge.

To learn more about the Abundance Co-op please check out their website <http://abundance.coop>



### January 2021: Reach Advocacy

Dec 28, 2020 | Co-op News

Each month Abundance is highlighting a local project that benefits the city of Rochester, collecting funds for that project through donations made both at our registers (Round Up\*) and through our website (Paypal). This month the coop will be supporting REACH Advocacy...

Thank you to the following people who became **Founding Members** this past month donating \$6057.35 to the **Tiny Home Village Fund** bringing the total contribution by Founders to our Tiny Home Village Fund to \$ 32,094.55

One anonymous donor-Thank you!  
Canandaigua National Community Foundation  
The Casswood Group Inc.  
Elliot DiLapi and Nina  
Alicia and Jeff Dmochowski  
Elaine and Craig Holt  
Theresa Marconi

We have a long way to go, but these Founders have voted in favor of our Tiny Home Village as a way to offer truly affordable and supportive housing to housing deprived men and women of our community.

If you would like to become a Tiny Home Village Founder by making a donation of \$250 or more, please send your check to REACH Advocacy, P.O. Box 10845, Rochester, NY 14610 and mark your check "Tiny Home Fund". Thank you, every gift helps us to get to our goal.

As of today we have \$88,211.02 toward our target of \$250,000 for the building of the first phase of our Tiny Home Village.

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## Advocacy Opportunities etc.



- Last month we petitioned the City Council to support the Emergency Housing Stability Displacement Prevention Act (S8667/A10827). A majority of the Council agreed and wrote to Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and Governor Andrew Cuomo. While these bills appear to still be in committee, **Governor Cuomo** did sign a COVID-19 Emergency Eviction and Foreclosure Prevention Act which will keep people from being evicted until May. But families will still owe rent arrears!!! And that more than likely means that there will be more and more families who become housing vulnerable. We have a housing crisis!
- To meet this housing crisis join the Supportive Housing Network in petitioning Governor Cuomo to continue funding supportive housing in the executive budget. [Learn more here.](#)
- Do you know anyone who has been denied or sanctioned by DHS? Have them send their story to the [RASE Commission](#)
- **Worth Reading:** Prof. Edward Goetz has written an article which challenges the assumption that poor people of color need to move to white neighborhoods to improve their opportunities. He describes the work of activists in Minneapolis - St. Paul who have successfully helped to change the narrative around poverty and justice. It is not just about where we live, or who we live with, but it is about having a voice at the table to say what justice means for us. Here is the link to his article: ['Opportunity Areas' Should't Just Be Places With a Lot of White People.](#)
- **Check this out:** [A Case for A Social Housing Authority.](#) If we want to change the narrative around housing, here is something to help us with the conversation. Housing that is solely subject to market forces will never be just housing if we believe that housing is a human right.

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



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