

Dream Homes Community Center

To: Mayor Mark Boughton and the City Council

From: Heather Ely, Homeless and Housing Advocate

Re: May 23, 2013 Monthly Report

cc: ARC Executive Director & ARC Board of Directors

I. Program Synopsis

Per the proposal endorsed by Mayor Boughton and the City Council, Dream Homes Community Center (DHCC) was established at ARC to serve as the Point of Entry for people who are homeless or low-income renters and to facilitate first time home ownership for people with hard to serve backgrounds.

II. Program Updates

Sharice Coleman has been hired as the full time Housing Advocate for Dream Homes Community Center. Sharice will begin her employment with ARC on June 3, 2013 with primary responsibility for Singles who are homeless or at risk. Sharice joins Heather Ely who will continue to work as a Housing Advocate and Case Manager – specifically for families who are homeless or at risk. Staffing is once again at full capacity following the thorough employment search. Sharice Coleman succeeds Jason Bartlett.

III. Point of Entry

From July 1, 2012 until May 23, 2013, DHCC has provided services to 690 **people (193 families with children and 104 single adults)** through the Point of Entry at ARC. The following is a breakdown of people served, by towns within the Greater Danbury Area:

Town	July 2010 - June 2011	July 2011 - June 2012	July 1, 2012 - May 27, 2013
Danbury	535	592	476
Bethel	39	26	62
Brookfield	38	33	10
New Fairfield	25	34	19
New Milford	81	77	65
Newtown	17	4	15
Redding	6	7	0
Ridgefield	9	8	5
Sherman	6	2	1
Other Towns	78	45	37
Total	834	828	690

IV. Outreach Highlights: Dream Homes Staff attended the following meetings and trainings:

Housing Advocate, Heather Ely, met with the Board of Directors of the Holland Family Foundation. This foundation has created privately funded Transitional Housing for single mothers. The meeting resulted in a Danbury mother of three securing a 2 bedroom apartment rent free for 6 months.

ARC's Housing Advocate also attended a Coordinated Access meeting for the Danbury Continuum of Care. This meeting was to help determine what course Coordinated Access would take in the Danbury Community.

Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH) offered a training in New Haven, CT. This training addressed homelessness in youth and children and provided important information on resources available to homeless families.

V. Program Highlights—Story of 1 family we worked with this month (names changed)

The Rubin Family came to ARC seeking assistance for a Security Deposit. The couple and their three young children had lived in the same Danbury residence for 15 years. At their most recent Section 8 housing inspection the apartment had failed to be recertified(over a matter pertaining to safety exits). The Rubin's were given 30 days to find a new apartment or they would lose their Housing Voucher.

Dream Home staff worked with the Rubin family and provided linkages to several apartments in the Danbury area. Despite these efforts the family was unable to secure housing before the expiration date on the voucher. The family was frightened and concerned. The Rubin's had minimal income and knew that they would be homeless if they lost their Section 8 Voucher. ARC established and maintained communication with the Rubin's case worker at the Danbury Housing Authority (DHA) and provided information that allowed the family to be granted an extension on their housing search.

The Housing Advocate then worked with the couple on the best ways to communicate with potential landlords, and continued to provide linkages to suitable apartments. When the couple eventually found housing they needed and were approved for a lease, they required a large sum of money toward the Security Deposit. ARC was able to provide \$1290 toward the Security Deposit and was able to leverage an additional \$1,100 from another Danbury agency. The couple and their children have now been successfully housed and are thriving in their new apartment.