



Dream Homes Community Center

To: Mayor Mark Boughton and the City Council
 From: Elke Sweeney, LMSW, Housing Advocate
 Re: October 2015 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.

Program Updates

Dream Homes Community Center continues to persevere in the efforts to assist Danbury’s “Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness”. Through our Coordinated Access Services, Dream Homes Community Center has served **97 people** in the city of Danbury alone since July 1, 2015.

Point of Entry

Since July 1, 2015, DHCC has provided services to **105 people** through the Point of Entry at ARC. The following is a breakdown by town:

Town	This Month (October 1, 2015–October 31, 2015)	Year to Date (July 1, 2015 – October 31, 2015)
Danbury	15 (8 households)	97
Bethel	0	0
Brookfield	0	0
New Fairfield	0	0
New Milford	5 (3 households)	28
Newtown	0	0
Redding	0	0
Ridgefield	0	0
Sherman	0	0
Other Towns	0	0
Total	20 (11 households)	125 ppl

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August Outreach Highlights: Dream Homes Housing Advocates attended the following meetings and trainings:

1. Met with *landlords* & performed inspections for clients' potential homes.
2. *Continuum of Care (COC)* meeting to discuss prioritization of **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Vouchers** to be used for housing chronically homeless individuals with a disability in Danbury.
3. *Housing First Collaborative* to discuss how clients chronicity of homelessness and VI-SPDAT scores will be used to select individuals for PSH and learn about program model designed to support newly housed clients.
4. *Housing Placement Committee (HPC)* to collaborate with other housing providers in order to determine which clients will receive the PSH Vouchers.
5. Statewide *Coordinated Access Network* to collaborate with providers from other counties on service models to best fit client needs.
6. *Housing sub-committee* for the **Danbury Housing Partnership** assisting with planning Landlord Coalition breakfast.
7. *Landlord Breakfast* was conducted this month to provide education for Danbury area Landlords about advocacy, assistance, and support given to individuals and families with housing needs. This educational breakfast was sponsored by the **Danbury Housing Partnership**.
8. *ZERO:2016 Summit Conference* was sponsored by **CT Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH)** in which Statewide Housing Advocacy groups which included **Dream Homes, Association of Religious Communities** participated in provided feedback, support, education, and advocacy on the needs of the homeless in the Danbury and greater Danbury area. Governor Malloy attended and spoke at this event.

II. Because of the **City Grant**, the Point of Entry was able to leverage and renew additional funds to help end and prevent homelessness, including:

1. *Homeless Educational Grants*: Provides costs toward tuition, child care, school supplies, transportation, and/or uniforms while participants are attending school. Clients must meet HUDs definition of homelessness or have proof of homelessness within the last 18 months. Case management is provided for 3 months to implement budgeting & financial planning.
2. *Vouchers 1*: Provides rent for chronically homeless, one of which has one member of the household with a disability.
3. *Vouchers 2*: Provides rent for veterans who were chronically homeless & one of which the majority of rent is paid for a family with a veteran who was chronically homeless per DMHAS contract.

III. **Program Highlights**—Story of one individual served by DHCC this month
A Point of Entry and Coordinated Access Success Story
(Names changed to maintain confidentiality)

Amy, is a disabled woman who was connected to ARC by Ability Beyond. Amy has experienced numerous health issues which attributed to job loss, and loss of housing. Amy encountered one of the most difficult moments in her life; she lost her apartment due to illness and became homeless. As a result, Amy resided in parks, and a few times at the shelter.

Due to her disabilities, Amy received services through Ability Beyond and was able to eventually qualify for a Section 8 voucher. With limited knowledge on housing, Amy's case manager had reached out to ARC's Housing Advocate for assistance in order to obtain safe, secure, and sanitary housing.

Amy came into ARC to seek assistance in Housing Advocacy in order to receive housing and support services for herself. ARC's Housing Advocate served as a guide and support system in finding safe, secure, and sanitary housing. ARC's Housing Advocate provided case-management by engaging in a monthly budgeting program with Amy, and developing a housing stability plan.

Eventually, Amy, with the assistance of ARC's Housing Advocate, found an apartment to suit her needs. Once housed, Amy and ARC's Housing Advocate set-up a care plan for her housing and case-management needs. ARC's Housing Advocate also served as a referral source by connecting Amy to programs such as CAAWC for energy assistance, and DSS for SNAP assistance. ARC assisted with Security Deposit.

Amy is grateful for the support, assistance, and advocacy ARC was able to provide. In addition, ARC provided Amy with a Welcome Basket which consisted of household supplies to make the move an easier transition for them. ARC continues to contact Amy on a weekly basis to see how she is doing.