



RHD Rural Delivery

New York State Rural Housing Coalition, Inc.

November, 2014

HUD Counts Show Homeless Decline

HUD Secretary Julián Castro recently announced HUD’s latest estimate of homelessness in the US, noting a continued general decline and specifically among veterans and persons living on the street. HUD’s 2014 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress finds that there were 578,424 persons experiencing homelessness on a single night in 2014. This represents an overall 10 percent reduction and 25 percent drop in the unsheltered population since 2010, the year the Obama Administration launched Opening Doors, the nation’s first comprehensive strategy to prevent and end homelessness.

HUD’s annual ‘point-in-time’ estimates seek to measure the scope of homelessness on a single night in January. Based on data reported by state and local planning agencies, last January’s one-night estimate reveals a 33 percent drop in homelessness among veterans, including a 43 percent reduction in unsheltered homelessness among veterans since 2010 and a 10.5 percent decline since last year. State and local communities also reported a 15 percent decline in the number of families with children experiencing homelessness since 2010, as well as a 53 percent reduction among these families who were found to be unsheltered.

“As a nation, we are successfully reducing homelessness in this country, especially for those who have been living on our streets as a way of life,” said Castro. “There is still a tremendous amount of work ahead of us but it’s clear our strategy is working and we’re going to push forward ‘til we end homelessness as we’ve come to know it.”

“The federal government, in partnership with states, communities, and the private and not-for-profit sectors, is focused on widespread implementation of what works to end homelessness,” said Laura Green Zeilinger, executive director of the US Interagency Council on Homelessness. “Continued investments in solutions like permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing using a Housing First approach is critical to the effort of every community to one day ensure homelessness is a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.”

During one night in late January of 2014, volunteers across the nation conducted a count of their local sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations. These one-night ‘snapshot’ counts are then reported to HUD as part of state and local grant applications. While the data reported to HUD does not directly determine the level of a community’s grant funding, these estimates,

as well as full-year counts, are crucial in understanding the scope of homelessness and measuring progress in reducing it.

The Obama Administration’s strategic plan to end homelessness is called Opening Doors – a roadmap for joint action by the 19 federal member agencies of the US Interagency Council on Homelessness along with local and state partners in the public and private sectors. The Plan puts the country on a path to end homelessness among veterans by 2015; chronic homelessness by 2016; and to ending homelessness among children, family, and youth by 2020. The Plan presents strategies building upon the lesson that mainstream housing, health, education, and human service programs must be fully engaged and coordinated to prevent and end homelessness.

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Rural Delivery

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New York State Rural Housing Coalition, Inc.

The Coalition is a non-profit statewide membership organization dedicated to strengthening and revitalizing rural New York by assisting housing and community development providers.

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Bits and Pieces...

NCHC Relocates

The St. Lawrence County Housing Council has relocated to 19 Main Street in Canton, New York. An open house to celebrate the move back into their long-time office space was held on October 17th. The Council operates under the DBA of North Country Housing Council. Congratulations to all of the staff at NCHC on this milestone!

TA Thursday Talks Census Data

The next TA Thursday will be held by HUD on Thursday, November 13th, from 9:30 – 10:30 AM. The Census Bureau traded the long form for more frequent, but smaller sampling of households. The American Community Survey is HUD's new basis for information related to neighborhood or block group level income data. Planning information is also available on the Census's American Fact Finder.

For November, HUD has invited a US Census Bureau Data Specialist and a HUD Allocation Analyst to review the available information, share how it can be used in your community and some tips for addressing any data questions in your community. The call will include discussion about the format of information, how it impacts your community planning and eligibility documentation ... and of course... plenty of time for your questions and discussion. WHERE: Via Conference Call In #: 888-675-2535 Access Code# 6394561.

Federal and U.S. military employees can support the Rural Housing Coalition through the annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). If you are a federal government or military employee and would like to donate through the CFC, please enter CFC code #9614 on your pledge card during the next fund drive.

HUD NOFA Released

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development has announced the availability of funding at approximately \$24 million for the Jobs Plus pilot program for Public Housing Agencies to develop locally-based approaches to increase earnings and advance employment outcomes for Public Housing residents. The Notice of Funding Availability seeks initiatives to improve employment and earnings outcomes for Public Housing residents through supports such as work readiness, employer linkages, job placement and financial literacy. Of the \$24 million available, \$9 million is made available from the ROSS appropriations to support the services element of the Jobs Plus pilot program. To obtain additional information and view the press release, visit: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/grants/fund-savail/nofa14/jppp. Deadline for submission is December 17th.

Will you be attending the Rural Advocates meeting in Cooperstown this month? Important conversation about the future of rural communities in our state will take place. Lend your voice to the conversation.

Report Recommends Improvements To Increase Voucher Mobility

A report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) examines the extent to which the Housing Choice Voucher program helps families with children move to low-poverty neighborhoods. Based on an analysis of existing literature, CBPP asserts that the voucher program can do far more to provide low income families with greater opportunities to move to lower-poverty neighborhoods.

The report focuses on findings from HUD's Moving to Opportunity (MTO) demonstration project, which found minimal economic or educational gains among families that moved to lower-poverty areas after receiving a voucher. However, CBPP presents a new perspective on the MTO findings by highlighting the fact that few families in the MTO experimental group lived in truly low-poverty neighborhoods long-term. Thus the question remains, might not economic or educational gains be greater if families are able to remain in low-poverty communities longer?

CBPP also discusses research conducted by the RAND Corporation, which found that low income students attending schools in low-

poverty neighborhoods made significant gains in reading and math over long periods of time. Based on the RAND and other studies, CBPP asserts that outcomes among voucher holders are likely to improve if households are able to move to, and live longer in low-poverty neighborhoods.

In order to make it easier for voucher holders to move to and live long-term in low-poverty areas, CBPP makes a number of policy recommendations. To make it easier to use a voucher across PHA boundaries, HUD should consider modifying its "portability" policies, and enact policies to encourage PHAs to form a consortium. HUD should also implement Small Area Fair Market Rents, which would more accurately adjust payment standards to more localized housing costs. And, more should be done to better support families using vouchers in higher opportunity areas, such as provide more extensive mobility counseling and moving assistance.

The report, *Creating Opportunities for Children: How Housing Location Can Make a Difference*, is at www.cbpp.org/files/10-15-14housing.pdf.

Lead And Asbestos Training Slated

Environmental Education Associates will hold training for renovation workers on Lead and Asbestos safe practices in November.

- Lead Renovator Initial Certification will be held on November 5th in Rochester and November 14th in Utica
- Lead Renovator Refresher will be held on November 13th in Buffalo.
- Asbestos Contractor/Supervisor Initial Certification will be held

on November 3rd-7th in Buffalo.

- Asbestos Contractor/Supervisor Refresher will be held on November 4th in Rochester or November 11th in Buffalo.
- Asbestos Handler Refresher will be held on November 12th in Buffalo.
- Asbestos Project Designer Refresher will be held on November 14th in Rochester (with AIA credits)

Contractors, landlords and property owners must attend EPA accredited RRP training before conducting any renovations in pre 1978 housing or a child-occupied facility. Half-day RRP refresher training must be completed by the expiration date of initial training. Certifications expire 5 years from the last training date.

For more information, visit the EEA website at <http://environmentaleducation.com/>.

Project Profile: The Project That Almost Wasn't

In our regular feature, Rural Delivery invites members of the Rural Housing Coalition to highlight their community development projects and programs in the pages of this newsletter. This month, we are pleased to present the story of Kinley Hill, a homeless housing project in Cattaraugus County, in western New York.

On October 28th, local officials, board members and staff of Cattaraugus Community Action celebrated the ribbon cutting for Kinley Hill, a homeless housing project in Salamanca, New York. Tina Zerbian, Executive Director of Cattaraugus Community Action (CCA), noted in her remarks that this was the project that almost wasn't. In fact, this was the the project that almost wasn't quite a number of times.

In 2009, CCA received an award from the Homeless Housing Assistance Program to adapt an existing vacant property in the City of Olean as a facility serving homeless individuals. After receiving the funding award, CCA staff discovered that the Olean building had been vandalized, stripped of its copper plumbing and wiring, and contaminating the building with asbestos in the process.

CCA worked with its preferred contractor to identify alternate sites, and numerous properties in Olean were inspected and rejected for a variety of reasons. Facing a looming deadline for cancellation of the funding award, CCA staff met with the new mayor of Salamanca to see if there might be any potential sites in that community. The mayor made a few calls and within 15 minutes had identified several possible options.

Don and Sandy Hill were the recipients of one of the Mayor's calls. They owned a steel framed industrial building in downtown Salamanca that housed the offices of their development firm. They were willing to sell the building to CCA for conversion to homeless housing use. The location was ideal, with a supermarket located next door, and CCA's services programs for substance abuse counseling and other supports located a short walk away. In February of 2013, just days before the HHAP grant award was set to expire, CCA was able to submit a revised project proposal to HHAP staff in Albany for approval.

As CCA intended to purchase the completed building as a turn-key project, the Hills needed to secure construction financing, which was obtained through Cattaraugus County Bank. Construction was managed by Kinley Construction Company, CCA's preferred contractor on the project.

Redevelopment of the building included stripping off the roof to install entirely new sheathing. The layout of the facility created 18 SRO units with shared common spaces on the south side of the building, and 10 transitional beds in double occupancy rooms on the north side. The building includes office space for case management staff, on-site coin laundry, shared bathroom fa-

cilities, kitchen and lounge spaces.

Ms. Zerbian noted that the initial roadblocks thrown in the path of the project ultimately resulted in a better project, particularly the change in locale. Previously, there were no homeless facilities or services on the western side of Cattaraugus County, although there are homeless needs



The Ribbon Is Cut, Opening Kinley Hill

in Salamanca. CCA's headquarters are in Salamanca, which provides easier access to the occupants of Kinley Hill to the services programs that are available through CCA, including job training, chemical dependency counseling, mental health services, and other supports that are typically needed by homeless individuals.

The project was made possible by an HHAP grant from the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance in the amount of \$2,723,835. Funding from the STEHP program will support site staff and services.

In her remarks at the ribbon cutting, Ms. Zerbian gratefully acknowledged the perseverance and support of Mr. and Mrs. Hill and their firm, Western Door Development, and Kinley Construction in seeing the project through to completion. That perseverance resulted in CCA naming the building in honor of their 2 partners in the project.



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Career Opportunities

Property Manager

The Property Manager is responsible for day to day management of the buildings owned and managed by the organization at the highest possible standards at all times. The Property Manager is responsible for tenant screening, leasing, rent collections, maintenance, repairs coordination, budgeting operating expenses, and capital improvement needs assessment and planning, and investor and funder compliance reporting and broadly representing the organization's short and long term interest in connection with operation of the buildings. The Property Manager reports to the Executive Director and supervises property management staff.

Experience

- Five to seven years experience in on-site property management in residential setting
- Must have experience with leasing and occupancy requirements for buildings with multiple funding sources
- Must have experience managing staff and administrative systems for progressive organization

Qualifications for this position:

- Strong leadership and supervision
- Ability to work effectively with different levels of management

- Ability to delegate effectively
- Ability to critically read, interpret, and complete documents carefully
- Strong oral and written communication; computer skills and experience with data
- Ability to facilitate positive changes in organizational culture
- Self Direction
- Ability to collect data and produce analysis to guide decision making
- Excellent collaborator and team member
- Valid driver's license and automobile insurance

How to apply:

Please email a cover letter and resume to: hr@galvanfoundation.org.

EOE

MWBE Certification Mentoring Available

Minority and Women owned businesses interested in obtaining certification as MBEs or WBEs often struggle to complete the certification process. The Allegany Business Center in Belmont, NY has a program to mentor certification applicants through the system. This free service is available to businesses from anywhere in New York State.

For more information, contact Bryan Gamache at (585) 268-7605 or Brandon Warnica at (585) 268-7080. or visit www.alleganybusinesscenter.com/.

The New York State Rural Housing Coalition is happy to be able to provide help wanted advertising opportunities for our members and non-profit community development agencies. Ad copy must be provided in Microsoft Word format, and may be transmitted by email to rhc@ruralhousing.org. Ad copy must comply with federal and state equal opportunity requirements to be published, and must be received by the 25th of the month to ensure placement in the succeeding issue of *Rural Delivery*. Ads provided in this fashion will also be posted in the Career Opportunities page of the Coalition's website, unless a request is specifically made not to place the advertisement on-line.

Small Business Mentoring Services Available Through NYS

Entrepreneurs often cite mentoring as essential to their success. For this reason, New York State, under the leadership of Governor Cuomo and in partnership with MicroMentor, created Business Mentor NY. Business Mentor NY is the State's first large scale, hands-on small business mentoring program that helps NYS entrepreneurs and established small businesses overcome challenges to grow their business. Business Mentor NY is an initiative of Empire State Development (ESD). ESD is New York's chief economic development agency. The mission of Empire State Development is to promote a vigorous and growing economy, encourage the creation of new job and economic opportunities, increase revenues to the State and its municipalities, and achieve stable and diversified local

economies. Through the use of loans, grants, tax credits and other forms of financial assistance, Empire State Development strives to enhance private business investment and growth to spur job creation and support prosperous communities across New York State. Generally, to participate, businesses should meet the New York State definition of a small business. A New York State small business is one that is located in NYS, employs 100 employees or less and is not dominant in its field. Additionally, Business Mentor NY is primarily for small businesses located in a county subject to a federal disaster declaration as a result of Superstorm Sandy (including Bronx, Kings, New York, Orange, Putnam, Queens, Richmond, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk

counties), Hurricane Irene or Tropical Storm Lee including Albany, Bronx, Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Columbia, Delaware, Dutchess, Essex, Franklin, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Kings, Montgomery, Nassau, New York, Oneida, Orange, Otsego, Putnam, Queens, Rensselaer, Richmond, Rockland, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Sullivan, Suffolk, Tioga, Tompkins, Ulster, Warren, Washington and Westchester counties.

According to the Business Mentor website, one in two businesses that received micromentoring services created a full time job, on average.

For more information, contact Ben Howard-Cooper at ben@businessmentor.ny.gov. Entrepreneurs interested in learning more can visit the website at <http://businessmentor.ny.gov/>.

New ACS Data Released

On October 23rd, the US Census Bureau released two new American Community Survey (ACS) products, the 2011-2013 three-year estimates and the 2013 one-year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files.

The Census Bureau surveys more than 3.5 million households using the ACS to gather information on social, demographic, housing, and economic characteristics. The results are released as one-, three-, and five-year estimates. Using three years of data allows the estimates to be statistically reliable for areas with populations of 20,000 or more. One-year estimates are provided only for areas with 65,000 or more people. The five-year estimates are available for all areas, including census tracts and block groups. The

2009-2013 five-year estimates will be released on December 4th.

Each year, the Census Bureau makes PUMS files available to the public so that researchers can more closely analyze ACS data. The PUMS files contain records on a subsample of housing units and information from the complete ACS questionnaire. PUMS data can be used to run custom tabulations. The Census Bureau also produces a large number of data profiles and tables based on the one-, three-, and five-year ACS estimates.

More information about the ACS is at www.census.gov/acs/www. PUMS files, data profiles, and standard tables provided by the Census Bureau are available on the American FactFinder website at <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

2015 NOFA Information Announced

HUD has posted the General Section information for the 2015 cycle of grant applications on their website. The General Section describes the requirements that are applicable to all HUD FY 2015 Program NOFAs. The General Section also provides information on HUD's priorities and strategic goals. To adequately address all of the application requirements for any program, applicants should carefully read and respond to both this General Section in addition to specific applicable Program NOFA requirements.

The information can be found at http://portal.hud.gov/hud-portal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/grants/fundsavail/2015gensec.

Affordable Housing Fellowships Created

NYSFAFH and SUNY recently announced a partnership that will fund four fellowships to graduate students at the University at Albany, University at Buffalo, Stony Brook University and Binghamton University starting in 2015-2016. The fellowships — each worth \$2,500 — will total \$10,000 in funding per year from the two organizations and go to four students in their final year of graduate school to help examine a specific field of interest they hope to pursue upon graduation.

“This fellowship will help train the next generation of affordable housing leaders,” Jolie Milstein, President and CEO of NYSFAFH,

said. “We are proud to partner with SUNY to prepare students to tackle the challenges facing affordable housing in our communities. Our fellows will develop the skills they need to create innovative solutions to problems in the field.”

The selected students will also have the opportunity to share their research at NYSFAFH’s annual Up-state New York Affordable Housing Conference. They’ll have the opportunity to participate in various events and networking opportunities sponsored by NYSFAFH, as well.

“With these fellowships, SUNY students will have direct access to

professionals in their career field as they complete the final stages of their degrees and job training,” SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher said in the release.

Applications for the program will be available on the www.SUNY.edu website, as well as the sites for all four participating schools, and must be submitted between December 1, 2014 through February 15, 2015 for the upcoming academic year. Candidates should submit a resume, two professional references and a personal statement of interest. Members of both NYSFAFH and SUNY will review and select the fellows.

Continued from Page 1

The decline in veteran homelessness is largely attributed to the close collaboration between HUD and the VA on a joint program called HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH). Since 2008, more than 59,000 rental vouchers have been awarded and approximately 45,000 formerly homeless veterans are currently in homes of their own because of HUD-VASH.

Long-term or chronic homelessness among individuals is declining quite substantially since 2010. This decline is partially attributable to a

Homelessness, Cont.

concerted effort to make available more permanent supportive housing opportunities for people with disabling health conditions who otherwise continually remain in shelters or on the streets. Research demonstrates that for those experiencing chronic homelessness, providing permanent housing coupled with appropriate supportive services without treatment preconditions, is the most effective solution for ending homelessness. This ‘housing first’ approach also saves the taxpayer considerable money by interrupting a costly cycle of emergency

room and hospital, detox, and even jail visits. Many communities are also making a special effort to identify youth experiencing homelessness on the night of their counts. Great strides have been made connecting young people to youth service providers, with particularly strong efforts focused on youth experiencing homelessness who are unsheltered. Communities are finding creative ways to identify and engage these unsheltered youth, through efforts like youth-targeted events to more intentional use of social media outlets.

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