

County Partners with Community Agencies, Directing more than \$3.8 Million to Address Homelessness

Over \$3.1 Million Directed to Hudson River Housing

Poughkeepsie, NY...In 2013, Dutchess County Government directed more than \$3.8 million in funding to address the issue of homelessness in our community. Over \$3.1 million goes to contract agency partner, Hudson River Housing, a local, non-profit organization dedicated to building strong, sustainable communities by developing and preserving quality affordable housing and helping families and individuals obtain and maintain housing through education, advocacy, and support services. The funding directed to Hudson River Housing provides emergency shelter as well as transitional and permanent housing opportunities and other programming.

Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro stated, "Dutchess County Government is engaged in a multi-faceted approach to combating homelessness in our community. We continue to provide substantial resources to ensure no one has to spend a cold night outdoors, but even more importantly, we are working to end chronic homelessness by providing opportunities for permanent supportive housing – with programs that target the specific needs of an individual or family."

Nearly \$500,000 of Hudson River Housing's (HRH) funding is a Dutchess County Children & Family Services (DCFS) contract for emergency temporary housing including the Webster House overnight shelter, which provides emergency housing, two meals (dinner and breakfast), and shower facilities for up to 60 homeless adults each night of the year. In recent weeks, as temperatures have dropped, need for overnight shelter exceeded available beds at the Webster House. DCFS Commissioner Robert Allers worked with HRH Executive Director Edmond Murphy to implement a temporary remedy to accommodate increased demand for emergency shelter, utilizing temporary spaces within existing facilities. DCFS and Family Services provided additional support to defray shelter staffing and transportation costs during extreme weather. This effort has also been supported by Dutchess Interfaith Council members conducting "second collections" for charitable donations. This initiative, which began on December 18th, has ensured no one has been left out in the cold.

DCFS also directs more than \$1.3 million to Hudson River Housing through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Safety funding to provide eligible individuals and families with case management and temporary housing. Additionally, DCFS' Youth Services Division directs over \$100,000 to HRH for its River Haven Program for runaway and homeless youth.

Additionally, the Dutchess County Department of Mental Hygiene has more than \$375,000 in contracts with HRH to provide housing units, supportive care and transportation for homeless individuals with serious and

persistent mental illness.

The focus of Dutchess County Government's efforts, however, is to find permanent housing solutions, with programming that allows individuals and families to live independently, rather than dependence on emergency sheltering. Hudson River Housing has been an important partner in those efforts.

Earlier in 2013, HRH took advantage of Dutchess County's new Agency Partner Grant program and received a grant award of \$48,000 to fund a "Housing Navigator" program to assist homeless adults and families find appropriate and stable housing. The program is designed to get long term emergency shelter users into more appropriate housing, freeing up beds for people truly in need of short term, emergency housing.

HRH also received an APG award of \$47,000 to expand its Financial Literacy program, increasing the number of available classes. Edmond Murphy noted, "There is a serious issue and growth of chronic, entrenched homelessness in our community, as evidenced by the recent overflows at the Webster House overnight shelter. While we have a temporary, stop-gap solution in place to get people through cold nights, we must continue to work toward real solutions. Hudson River Housing's objective is to prevent and end homelessness creating a path into permanent housing, with programs to help people build independent lives. In 2013, HRH's programs and services have assisted more than 80 chronically homeless adults into permanent, stable housing, but there is much more work to be done. We are grateful for the continued partnership with Dutchess County Government as we seek permanent solutions to address homelessness."

The Dutchess County Department of Planning & Development also works closely with Hudson River Housing to create permanent supportive housing, directing over \$420,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Program (HOME) funding to provide community programming and affordable housing developments in Dutchess County. Projects include the creation of affordable rental units on North Clinton Street and Garden Street, both in the City of Poughkeepsie. The 81 Garden Street project is expected to be completed in early 2014, and will offer studio apartments for homeless veterans, providing extensive support and specialized services to help veterans adapt to and maintain permanent housing.

Hudson River Housing also applied for and received federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care funding through the Dutchess County Housing Consortium planning, which is coordinated by the Department of Planning and Development. HRH has received over \$315,000 for two grants which provide 23 permanent housing units for homeless individuals and families.

Dutchess County Government also directs funding to other community partner agencies to address homelessness, including Catholic Charities for homeless prevention case management, and Rehabilitation Support Services and MARC for permanent supportive housing rental assistance. Other HOME funding projects include Highridge Gardens, which provides 50 units for persons with mental illness.

In 2014, a new pilot program through Legal Services of the Hudson Valley will receive \$10,000 in CDBG funding for veterans homeless eviction prevention.

"Dutchess County Government continues to work closely with Hudson River Housing and other agencies to

address homelessness in our county. Funding decisions are made based on specific programming objectives and measured outcomes. Our focus continues to be on the creation of permanent housing and programming that target the specific needs of individuals and families so they can access long term housing solutions and not be forced into emergency shelters. We know the needs remain, so, with compassion and fairness, we work with individuals and organizations to provide assistance. Never turning a blind eye, the work of employees and volunteers continue to make a difference,” concluded County Executive Molinaro.

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