

TOGETHER

A newsletter for people who believe that decent, affordable housing should be available to everyone in Dutchess County

January 2007

Volume 16 , Number 1

Wind Chill Fund ~ Give and Let Live

"We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." - Sir Winston Churchill

The cold winter season is upon us once again and many of our Dutchess County residents will be at risk of homelessness and will become homeless. Although this is a recurring fact, for those who experience homelessness, this fact is very real and will never become old or familiar. As many of us sit at our tables to enjoy our evening meals with our families this year, it may cross our minds to be grateful for our abundance, for our meals, our homes, and the company of our loved ones, but it may not cross our minds to think of those in need of the same basic privileges.

However, many of you, our donors in this community, tell us that Hudson River Housing has been a blessing, a beacon serving those facing homelessness during the past 24 years. With your generous donations, we have continued to do what we do best ~ welcome, with open arms, those in need of our emergency shelter; and every day of the year, provide them with a safe place to sleep, a shower, hot meals, transportation, access to case management and advocacy services.

Each is a hopeful soul walking through the doors of our 60-bed overnight shelter, and very grateful that we are here to welcome them. There is a real story behind each face. As we listen to each one, we at Hudson River Housing get to see the value of our work. They renew us and recharge us to keep us working harder.

Each story is worth telling, so we invited Angel Ramos, one of our many success stories, to share his experience.

In 2002, Angel was 50 years old, became homeless, and started using our emergency overnight shelter. To understand how far Angel has come, he took us on a journey through his life. After his mother died when he was five years old, Angel and his siblings went to live in St. Agatha's Home for Children in Spring Valley, NY, where he stayed until he was 14 years old. When his father was finally once again able to take care of the family, Angel and his siblings were reunited with him and his aunt. As a teen, Angel began abusing alcohol, and continued to use for the next thirty-six years of his life. Angel explained to us:

"I burnt all of my bridges with my family, and my friends. I lost my apartment in the Bronx and many jobs. I had nowhere else to go. I was sleeping on the streets until a friend told me about the Family Partnership, and they referred me to the Hudson River Housing overnight shelter."

At the time Angel became homeless, he was working with Labor Ready doing temporary day construction work. Like so many of our employed and homeless people, Angel wasn't making enough money to afford an apartment in Dutchess County. For a year, Angel kept returning to our emergency overnight shelter while he was struggling to maintain his sobriety. It was his decision to then reach out for help, and he was admitted to a rehab program at R.C. Ward in Middletown, NY. Since his recovery a year ago, Angel has moved into our transitional housing at Hillcrest, and has been taking advantage of all of our useful services.

He is really proud of maintaining his sobriety, and is currently attending an outpatient treatment program at the Lexington Recovery Center.

Angel's excitement to start a new page in his life is very palpable. He is now focused on going to VESID, returning to school, and acquiring new vocational skills. Now, the brilliant smile on his face speaks volumes, but the words he shared with us also do, "If it wasn't for the Hudson River Housing shelter none of this would've been possible."



Angel Ramos

In 2004, one of our own Hudson River Housing, Inc. programs, the Dutchess County Coalition for the Homeless (DCCH), launched the Wind Chill Fund Campaign, the focus of which is to get more financial support from you, our community residents, in order to meet the needs of our many homeless people like Angel Ramos. In 2006, your contributions to the Wind Chill Fund Campaign made it possible for Hudson River Housing to provide emergency overnight shelter for 11,667 homeless people and to serve 23,334 hot meals.

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Although we have served this great number of homeless people in our overnight shelter, the number of people in need will, no doubt, increase each year. Turning away homeless people during the bitter cold winter months has always been heart breaking for us. The reality remains that without more funds we will not be able to serve as many of the homeless people who come to our doors.

This will always be our challenge to overcome, but the weight does become much lighter with your financial support. The continuous support of the Dutchess County Department of Social Services has also been critical in helping us to keep our shelter doors open. We are truly grateful for their generous donation each year.

Our Wind Chill Fund Campaign has been successful at bringing more awareness to our cause of providing emergency shelter for the homeless in Dutchess County. Our goal is to work diligently at creating many opportunities to offer you the chance to make a valuable contribution and to make a life by what you give.



Sleeping quarters at the DCCH Shelter

The Wind Chill Fund Campaign presents to you an opportunity to make a tax-deductible donation during our first annual fundraising dinner on March 22, 2007, at the Culinary Institute of America. We look forward to you joining us in our efforts to raise more money to serve our homeless, who greatly depend on the work that we do. We can all do our part in keeping the wind chill off the hill.

Development News

Stages I & II of the City of Poughkeepsie Main Street Program Now Complete

The renovation of Barrett Clay Works at 485 Main Street and Behrends Court at 382-394 Main Street represents the completion of a significant portion of our City of Poughkeepsie Main Street Program. We are acting as the local administrator of this Program after receiving a \$200,000 grant from DHCR New York Main Street. Barrett Clay Works and Behrends Court were chosen to be two of the recipients of the funding based on their potential to revitalize blighted areas of Poughkeepsie's Main Street Corridor.

Barrett Clay Works is owned and operated by the Dutchess County Arts Association, and consists of open space for ceramics classes on the first floor and various artist studio spaces on the second and third floors. Classes for all ages and skill levels are held regularly at the site. With the assistance of the City of Poughkeepsie Main Street Program, Barrett Clay Works was able to improve the interior space and façade of the building, and return a vacant, blighted building to productive use that provides educational and enjoyable activities for community residents.

Behrends Court is a mixed-use property owned and operated by Jon Behrends. The project consists of 40 rehabilitated residential units and 9 rehabilitated commercial spaces on the 300 Block of Main Street. In addition to providing much-needed housing opportunities and encouraging commercial investment in the City, Behrends Court was built using green-building design. Features such as bamboo and cork flooring, photovoltaic systems for the generation of electricity, and rainwater collection systems have resulted in an environmentally responsible project that reduces adverse impacts in the community while highlighting the historical attributes of the Main Street Corridor.

The third project to be completed under the City of Poughkeepsie Main Street Program is our own 291 Mill Street, which will be transformed into a home for our Home Ownership Center, and two low-income apartments. Work has already begun on this project and is expected to be completed by Spring 2007.



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Contact: Mary Linge
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ABOUT OUR AGENCY

Hudson River Housing, Inc. (HRH) is a NeighborWorks Organization and a Neighborhood Preservation Company that develops, rehabilitates, and operates emergency, transitional and permanent housing for low to moderate income and homeless families and individuals in Dutchess County. In addition to housing, HRH provides supportive services intended to aid the residents in achieving and maintaining stable and long-term housing, in increasing their skills levels, and in gaining more influence over their lives.

Projects & Programs of Hudson River Housing:

After Hours Emergency Placement - Places Dutchess County individuals and families that become homeless outside of regular business hours due to non-disaster related circumstances.

Development Programs - HRH is committed to eliminating blight and creating homeownership opportunities in the City of Poughkeepsie and beyond.

Dutchess County Coalition for the Homeless (DCCH) - An overnight shelter located in a wing of Hillcrest. Up to 12 adults are served each night. Two meals, shower and laundry facilities, advocacy and referral services are provided.

Follow Through Program - A program providing follow-through support to DSS supported families and individuals leaving emergency housing.

Gannett House - A program offering case management services to individuals and families placed in emergency housing who seek a quick transition to independent housing.

Hillcrest House - 58 units of transitional, single room occupancy (SRO) housing for adults. A food service program, resident council, activities and a continuum of services are provided for all residents for up to two years.

Home Base I and II - Twelve units of supported permanent housing targeted toward chronically chemically dependent, homeless young adults and families.

Hudson River Lodging - A traditional motel featuring daily and monthly rates. Accommodations to meet the diverse needs of local residents, travelers, and corporations/agencies looking for placement for their employees and clients, and others seeking lodging.

LaGrange House - A program to provide case management services to assist formerly homeless clients in assessing the impact their strengths and weaknesses have on their ability to obtain and retain permanent housing.

Maybrook Gardens - 36 units of senior housing located in Maybrook, New York.

Maximize - HRH owns and operates 12 apartments in the City of Poughkeepsie to provide permanent, low cost rental housing for formerly homeless families. Case management services are provided.

River Haven - A program designed to address the needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families, as well as to assist older youth in making the transition to independent living.

Shelter Plus Care Program - Supported housing that provides 10 units of permanent housing & supportive services to homeless individuals and their families disabled by Severe & Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI).

The Home Club - An educational program for first time homebuyers.

Hudson River Housing

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