

14th Annual
HOPE HOUSE
CELEBRITY FASHION SHOW

Friday, October 26th
Doubletree Hotel

Wine Tasting: 11am-12pm
Luncheon & Fashion Show: 12-2pm

CELEBRITY MODELS

- Mark Agee
- Joyce M. Cameron
- Dr. Jeff Collins
- Officer Teresa Fuller
- Lori & Jeff Humphrey
- Robert Johnson
- Sheriff Knezovich
- Debi Moon
- Brian Myers
- Sister Sue Orłowski
- Jeff Phillips
- Cheryl Simpkins
- Kim Troyer
- Chief Van Leuven
- Elliott Wilde
- Officer Mike Yates

**FALL FASHIONS**

- Chatter's Salon
- David's Bridal
- Finders Keepers
- The Gift
Shop @
Sacred Heart
- Jos. A. Bank
- The Makeup Studio
- Pounders Jewelry
- Tuxedo Gallery

Table of Eight: \$350
Individual: \$45

Reserve Your Seats Today!

www.voaspokane.org • 509.624.2378



2012 Annual Report: Collaborating to cut down homelessness at its roots

Times are still tough. It's true. But, more importantly, it's true that supporters like you continue to meet the challenge. You do so much good in our community. Your dollars, donations of goods and services, and volunteer efforts make a massive difference every day.

The silver lining of all the belt-tightening of the past few years is this: we've become even *more* creative in attacking the real causes of poverty and homelessness—lack of affordable housing, chronic health problems, inadequate health care coverage and poor connections to education, employment and mental-health treatment to name a few.

We've learned to dig deep to make the most of every morsel of support we receive. We've become the largest provider of permanent, supportive housing in Spokane. We are helping those we serve to get essential preventative medical, mental health and dental care by finding them a "medical home." And we've become experts at collaborating. Did you know that in the past year we have joined forces with Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, SNAP, Sacred Heart E.R., Transitions, Christ's Clinic (among others) to tackle homelessness and housing issues in our community?

You know that we offer the most basic care to men, women, teens and babies in need—food for their bellies, clothes on their backs, a safe place to sleep. It's essential work but it's not the end of what we do.

We know that providing basic comfort and safety is not enough. Our ultimate goal is to help our people to break the cycles that trap them in poverty and homelessness. That happens when we offer resources and connections to help people get an education, reclaim their health, find a job, raise a stable family—all the things that help them advance and achieve self-sufficiency.

Every day your dollars work to knock down the barriers and obstacles that lead to homelessness and keep people there. When you read the following pages I hope you will feel as good about the outcomes of our work together as I do.



President/CEO

Services for Kids

27 years ago, when the community asked for help with street kids, Volunteers of America opened the Crosswalk teen shelter. Thousands of homeless and high-risk youth have eaten, slept and been loved at Crosswalk over those years.

When our “older” kids had no place to call home, we created our three transitional housing programs: Alexandria’s House, Aston-Bleck Apartments and Flaherty House. When we learned that our state’s foster kids were aging out of the system unprepared for adulthood, we began our Independent Living programs for foster youth. Finally, our neighbors in Coeur d’Alene saw a need for a drop-in center and emergency host home program in Kootenai County.

Alexandria’s House for pregnant or parenting teens & their babies

At Alexandria’s House young mothers and their babies receive medical care and parenting training before and after they deliver. The program is currently preparing to move to a much larger home where the staff and clients are looking forward to easier access to public transportation and more space in the common areas of the house. We served 14 pregnant young women and 12 babies this year.

“The program has built some wonderful partnerships,” says manager Jill Staples. *“We’ve got service-learning students from Gonzaga helping the girls with homework, Circle of Security classes teaching parenting, Washing-*

ton Trust Bank is running an 8-week Money Smart program with our clients and the WSU food extension has been teaching cooking classes. It is wonderful to see the community rally around these fragile young families.” ■

Aston-Bleck Apartments for young women, parenting

Tenants of the Aston-Bleck transitional apartments work with case managers to build strong attachments in their families and to develop concrete skills that prepare them to live on their own successfully. The apartments served 13 young women and 14 children this year.

This year, seven of the young women attended college and four found employment. Eleven of the 15 moms participated

in counseling through the Marycliff Institute and all took various classes including parenting, budgeting, cooking, renter’s responsibility, internet safety and literacy. Of the moms who transitioned out of the program, all moved into permanent housing.

“The group classes and celebrations help the moms form a support system with each other as well,” explains program manager Sara Mack. ■

Crosswalk shelter, school & multi-service center for homeless teens

“For kids who have had few opportunities, it’s important to get them out of the shelter and away from downtown—it allows them to see different possibilities for what their life can be like,” says program manager Stephen Miller. *“This year, thanks to donors, we visited waterfalls and went river rafting, rock climbing and snow shoeing. We saw shows and went to theme parks and sporting events,”*

Despite decreases in funding, staff and resources, our teen shelter and its support services helped nearly 1,000 youth in the past year, with shelter use continuing to increase. Volunteers served more than 11,000 meals. The on-site school program educated 153 youth—18 of whom received a GED or high school diploma and are preparing for college next year. And more than shelter and food, we offered youth a chance to expand their horizons. ■

Crosswalk North Idaho services and shelter for at-risk youth

This year, Crosswalk North Idaho (formerly Project Safe Place) served 120 youth—70 of whom were new to the program. Crosswalk North Idaho met the demand by expanding its drop-in services from three to five afternoons a week. Loyal meal providers served more than 2,000 meals and snacks. Volunteers and staff offered everything from tutoring and backpacking trips to help finding a summer job. Our emergency host home program provided more than 120 nights of shelter.

“Our new name reflects the hard work we are doing to provide a way for youth to cross from instability to stability,” explains program director Brandi Smitherman. *“Whether it’s helping solve a family conflict or something as simple as providing clean clothing so a kid feels more comfortable at school, Crosswalk is all about helping kids keep moving in the right direction.”* ■



This year, 949 volunteers contributed nearly 24,000 hours throughout our programs! Our volunteers are difference makers—like Joyce Malone, Judi Conroy and Dorothy Balum (left to right). These dedicated women have given decades of service to Volunteers of America between them, volunteering every Monday evening at Crosswalk teen shelter, distributing free books to low-income kids at the Christmas Bureau and helping to plan fundraisers and events. ■

Flaherty House for young men transitioning out of homelessness

Flaherty House is really the only place in Spokane where at-risk young men between 18 and 21 can finish growing up. This year, the Flaherty House transitional living program housed 14 young men. Most have childhood and adolescent years marred by homelessness, family conflict, neglect, substance abuse and problems in school. It's no wonder they have trouble adjusting from adolescence to adulthood—something young men struggle to do even in the best circumstances. Our “guys” learn how to hold a job, cook, garden and get along with house mates.

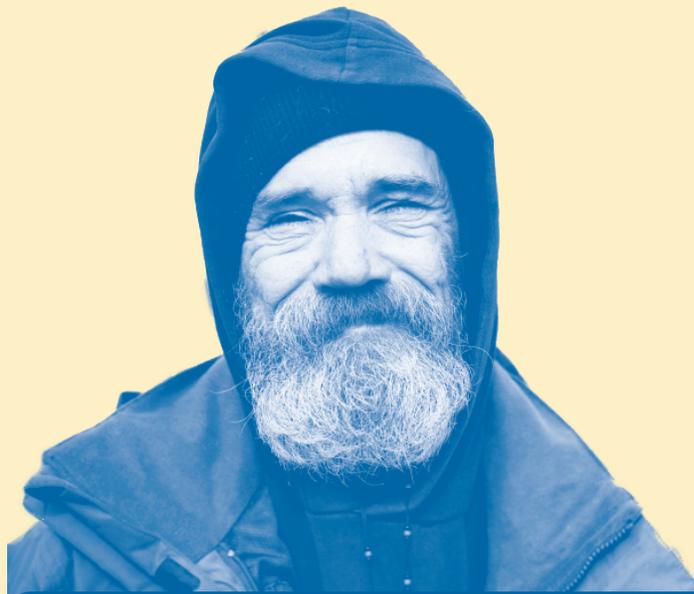
In the past year, program manager Colleen Perron has seen more boys committed to finishing high school and continuing on to college. *“While most clients don't even consider college a possibility before coming into our program, it is presented as an “expectation” all through their stay. They begin to see themselves in that role as well. Two of our guys enrolled in college this year and one is all set to start winter quarter.”* ■

Independent Living services for teens “aging out” of foster care

We served more than 664 foster kids through our Independent Living programs—helping them get ready to “age out” of the foster care system by offering skills, resources and support from age 15 to 21. In addition to providing dozens of classes each year—from budgeting and communication skills to career planning and help applying for college and financial aid—Independent Living offers programs that support youth as they live in their first apartment, prepare for college and learn to advocate for themselves in the real world.

Education continues to be a focus with 73 youth designing an educational plan through our SETuP program, which is designed to help foster youth get to college and succeed when they arrive.

“Statewide, less than one third of foster youth graduate from high school and less than one percent graduate from college,” says Sara Mack, Independent Living's program manager. *“That's why it's so amazing that 22 of our 30 seniors graduated this year—75%! All 22 are headed to college. Also, one received a GED, two are in vocational programs and two joined the military.”* ■



Services for Veterans

After years of neglect it is inspiring to know that our veterans are finally getting the attention they deserve. Our two homes and our housing/employment collaboration are examples of what can happen when homeless veterans get into real homes.

About Face transitional housing for veterans leaving incarceration

We continue to partner with Goodwill Industries to help Veterans who are leaving incarceration and also face issues of homelessness. Having just completed the second year of this three-year grant, the About Face team helps men and women address the underlying issues that led to both their incarceration and homelessness.

Goodwill provides occupational assessments, training and job placement. Volunteers of America's housing resource specialist then helps individuals find permanent housing. This year, the program served 62 veterans.

The program continues to be well connected to services throughout our area including Veterans Court, Healthcare for Homeless Vets and other V.A. programs.

“The level of collaboration in this program is amazing” says director Jon Carollo. *“It means that veterans who participate have really well-rounded care. It's more than a chance for housing. It's also a chance at financial, physical, mental and social well-being. It's about the whole picture.”* ■

Veterans' Housing for chronically homeless veterans

This year our two houses for formerly homeless veterans—Rest & Recoup House and the Eagles' Rest—served 36 veterans. During the year, 78% of these vets “graduated” into apartments of their own. Twelve were able to do so with no public support or rental subsidies.

Last year, five mountain bikes were donated to the program. The resulting freedom and camaraderie was so powerful that the men in the houses launched a community service program to serve other veterans—Bikes 4 Homeless Vets. The men in both houses meet regularly to administer the program in which they raise funds and gather used bikes to refurbish and give to homeless vets. This year the group raised more than \$700 and distributed more than 40 bikes to vets in need.

“We were also awarded \$30,000 by the Home Depot Foundation to be used in providing weatherization and basic repairs to both houses,” says Beth Kerr, who oversees both vets' houses. *“They sent great people to do the work. Their work really goes a long way toward keeping these two houses in shape and offering comfortable homes where vets can rebuild their lives.”* ■

Services for Adults

Our shelters, permanent housing and emergency support services serve a challenging population of disabled and chronically-homeless men and women—most of whom deal with serious mental health and/or physical disabilities. Our shelter guests, apartment residents and emergency services recipients benefit from the dozens of collaborations we've built with other providers of mental health, medical, employment, educational and housing services.

Emergency Services rent & energy assistance to prevent homelessness among low-income families

We distributed nearly \$52,000 in emergency assistance this year—helping more than 670 people in 310 households. It's more than just help to pay the rent, keep the heat on, fill the gas tank, pick up a prescription, or get a bus pass. For many, these simple favors actually prevent homelessness.

"Not missing a dose of an important prescription can keep someone out of the hospital or off the street," explains Tracey Hirt, who administers the program. *"They seem like little things but they can have a really big impact for both the community and the person receiving the assistance."* ■

Hope House emergency shelter & long-term housing for single women

The Hope House shelter served 255 different women and offered 11,279 bed nights this year, with the shelter at capacity most nights. Women continued to report domestic violence, lack of health insurance, mental health issues, physical disability, sexual assault and substance abuse as causes for their homelessness. We helped 30 shelter guests find transitional or permanent housing and our 25 on-site apartments continue to be full with just four women moving out this year.

"Times are still tough and funding is tight," says shelter director Rusty Barnett. *"But thanks to our generous volunteers—who gave nearly 3,500 hours of their time—and collaborations with other*

agencies we're still here for any woman who needs us."

This year we also embarked on two collaborative grants (in partnership with various local agencies) that help this vulnerable population access medical, mental health and dental treatment—a major issue among homeless populations. Thanks to these partnerships we sent only 48 women to the emergency room (last year, we sent 142)—a 66% decrease. ■

Rapid Re-housing preventing homelessness through housing resources & assistance

We understand that a little assistance can prevent homelessness in the first place. That's why our Rapid Re-Housing program, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, provided help with initial move-in costs and short-term assistance with rent to 37 families and individuals who would have otherwise faced homelessness.

"This year concluded the three-year federal grant," explains Jon Carollo, who directs the program. *"The great thing about this program is that not only do they have to demonstrate need, the family also has to show that they can keep their apartment on their own once the support ends. This program was meant to bridge the gap and prevent homelessness until folks could get back on their feet."* ■

Scattered-Site Housing for disabled, chronically homeless adults

This year we added 10 new units for chronically homeless and disabled veterans. Combined with our existing units in the

community and the 25 apartments at Hope House, we are Spokane's largest provider of permanent housing with support services like case management to assist men and women as they transition from the streets to stability.

Part of that process is fostering a sense of community. *"We started resident meetings to learn how we can improve the program,"* says program manager Heather Taylor-Thomas. *"The residents bring us great ideas like partnering with local COPS shops to identify criminal activity in or around our housing. We continue to have monthly social gatherings and our clients gave more than 800 volunteer hours to maintaining properties, answering phones and helping other clients move in or out. It has really built a sense of community among them—which increases their chances to stay in stable housing."* ■



Volunteers from Liberty Mutual's "Serve with Liberty" initiative made a huge difference this year. Not only did they donate clothing, meals and hundreds of hand-made hygiene kits to Crosswalk, they also painted and organized the clothing room and food bank at the shelter.

And they didn't stop there! The group also painted, cleaned and organized one of our homes for veterans and scrubbed down Hope House women's shelter!



Volunteers
of America®

EASTERN WASHINGTON
& NORTHERN IDAHO

WORKING WONDERS IS A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA OF EASTERN WASHINGTON & NORTHERN IDAHO. ALL NEWS AND ARTICLES ARE PRESENTED STRICTLY FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES. PLEASE SEND ARTICLE SUGGESTIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS OR MAILING ADDRESS CHANGES TO:

SARAH HOWARD, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA
525 W SECOND AVENUE • SPOKANE, WA 99201
showard@voaspokane.org