



## Dream Homes Community Center

To: Mayor Mark Boughton and the City Council  
 From: Elke Sweeney, LCSW, Housing Advocate  
 Re: January 2016 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 **185 people** in the city of Danbury alone since July 1, 2015.

#### *Point of Entry*

Since July 1, 2015, DHCC has provided services to **253 people** through the Point of Entry at ARC. The following is a breakdown by town:

<b>Town</b>	<b>This Month (January 1-January 31, 2016)</b>	<b>Year to Date (July 1, 2015 – January 31, 2016)</b>
Danbury	23 (15 households)	185
Bethel	1 (1 households)	6
Brookfield	0	0
New Fairfield	0	0
New Milford	8 (2 households)	50
Newtown	0	0
Redding	0	0
Ridgefield	0	0
Sherman	0	0
Other Towns	8 (4 households)	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 (22 households)</b>	<b>254 ppl</b>

Continued on Next Page

**January 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. *Winter Cold Weather Protocol* became in effect on December 15<sup>th</sup> 2015. ARC's **Housing Advocate** provides immediate care and relief for individuals and families in need of shelter by accessing and coordinating individuals and families to local shelters or emergency motels. 100% of the Cold Weather Protocol grant goes to pay for motel and transportation services if needed, and 0% goes to ARC.
9. Participated in *Point in Time Count*. **Housing Advocate** interviewed local individuals in various shelters. Provided documentation to Statewide organizations to enhance and improve services and support for individuals and families experiencing homelessness

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 HUD's 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)

Daniel is a new father who was connected to ARC through Danbury City Welfare. Daniel, his wife, and newborn daughter (2 weeks old) had been homeless and doubling up with family members, and staying in their car since the end of August 2015. Daniel reached out to ARC's *Housing Advocate* to request assistance in seeking an affordable 1 bedroom apartment. Daniel had been unemployed for some time, and recently obtained steady employment.

With limited knowledge on housing and renting issues, Daniel reached out to ARC to seek assistance in support services. 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, and developing a housing stability plan.

Once Daniel was approved to move into his apartment, Daniel, his wife, and ARC's *Housing Advocate* met with the Landlord. ARC's *Housing Advocate* assured the Landlord that ARC provided and continues to provide support in budgeting and finance management. The apartment met all requirements for *safe, secure, and sanitary housing*. ARC's *Housing Advocate* completed *habitability inspection*, and the apartment was within the *rent-reasonable* amount determined.

ARC's *Housing Advocate* was present during move-in day, and provided Daniel and his family with a "Welcome-Basket" complete with cleaning products and household supplies. "Welcome-Baskets" are provided by donation to ARC and given to individuals and families newly housed.

ARC's *Housing Advocate* set-up a care plan for his housing and case-management needs. ARC's *Housing Advocate* also served as a referral source by connecting Daniel and his family to programs such as CAAWC for energy assistance, Hopeline, WIC, and DSS for SNAP assistance. ARC assisted with Security Deposit.

Daniel is grateful for the support, assistance, and advocacy ARC was able to provide. ARC continues to contact Daniel and his family on a weekly basis to see how they are doing.