



Dream Homes Community Center

To: Mayor Mark Boughton and the City Council
 From: Elke Sweeney, LCSW, Housing Advocate
 Re: April 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 **308 people** in the city of Danbury alone since July 1, 2015.

Point of Entry

Since July 1, 2015, DHCC has provided services to **479 people** through the Point of Entry at ARC. The following is a breakdown by town:

Town	This Month (Apr.1 – Apr. 30, 2016)	Year to Date (July 1, 2015 – April 30, 2016)
Danbury	45 (19 households)	308
Bethel	1 (1 households)	31
Brookfield	0	8
New Fairfield	0	4
New Milford	7 (2 households)	81
Newtown	0	2
Redding	0	0
Ridgefield	2 (1 households)	4
Sherman	0	2
Other Towns	8 (2 households)	39
Total	63 (25 households)	479 ppl

Continued on Next Page

April 2016 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. **Capitol Day, Hartford, CT.** Participated in promoting ARC Housing services and advocacy provided for Danbury and Greater Danbury Residents. Representatives *Dan Carter* and *Bob Godfrey* were aware of ARC's participation.
8. ARC's **Housing Advocate** Collaborate with *DARA (Danbury Area Refugee Assistance Program)* to provide Housing Advocacy for Syrian Refugee family of six.
9. Rapid Rehousing Program renewed for three years.

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 HUDs 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)

Ivan, his wife, and 3 children were connected to ARC through ARC's **Refugee Resettlement Program**. Ivan and his family were referred to ARC through DARA (Danbury Area Refugee Assistance program). Ivan and his family were at imminent risk of homelessness and in process of being excused from their doubled-up living situation. DARA, Ivan, and his family came to ARC to seek *assistance with housing, and accessing social service programs*. Although Ivan and his family are receiving Federal Funding for rent, they were unaware of the process in obtaining housing services and accessing resources in the community.

ARC's *Housing Advocate* served as a *guide and support system* in finding *safe, secure, and sanitary housing*, and *connected* Ivan and his family to *local landlords*. ARC's *Housing Advocate* also facilitated *budgeting and rent readiness guide*.

With ARC's assistance and guidance, DARA and Ivan found an apartment suitable for Ivan and his family's needs. Ivan and his family are now housed. Their apartment met all requirements for *safe, secure, and sanitary housing*, and the apartment was within the *rent-reasonable* amount determined.

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 Ivan and his family of four to programs such as CAAWC for energy assistance, DSS for SNAP and Medicaid assistance, and in-house referral to ARC's **Refugee Resettlement Program** nutrition program. In the future, ARC's *Housing Advocate* will connect Ivan and his family to other housing and social service program resources.

Ivan is grateful for the *support, assistance, and advocacy* ARC was able to provide.