Fundraiser Helps CRT Pantry

A fundraiser put on by a new partner, Chef Jay Lewis, drew twice as many guests as expected and raised $700 for the CRT Food Pantries.

NBC 30
2/22/2015

CT NOW
2/23/2015

JOURNAL INQUIRER
2/18/2015

317 CLICKS
Financial Literacy Institute Graduation

The fifth annual Financial Literacy Institute helped 15 adults understand money management and granted three college credits to all graduates.
Working to End Homelessness

CT MIRROR OP-ED
2/11/2015

Op-Ed: This year's homeless count is start of a revolution

By LISA TEPPER BATES | February 11, 2015

Every year, our state joins in a national “Point in Time” count to identify those who are homeless on our streets and in our shelters. This year’s effort, postponed due to snow and now scheduled for Feb. 18, will take these efforts to a new, and more productive level.

Rather than just counting the numbers of children, women, and men experiencing homelessness in Connecticut, we will collect information on their specific housing, medical and employment needs.

Sounded simple, doesn’t it?

And yet, in the field of homelessness, this is a revolution.

For years, shelters have done the best they could to bring each person and family in out of the cold every night. Agencies offering housing and supports have done the best this they could to help those in need, in as equitable a way as they could manage.

But now the field of homelessness — like all other areas of the for-profit and non-profit worlds — is learning the power of data systems and knowledge sharing to enhance our work. In homelessness, this means bringing together multiple agencies in each community around the common goal of making the experience of homelessness infrequent and brief.

To understand why this is such a profound change, it helps to understand where we come from.

In the past, each program kept its own waitlist for housing and other important services, and allocated resources largely according to who submitted an application first.

Under that old system, providers and public officials had no way to gain a global view of the total needs to end homelessness in their community. Each agency just knew how long its waitlist was, and who was on it. No one could really answer the question of whether (or not) the most intensive resources were correctly directed to the people who needed them most.

The old system focused too much on the services those agencies provided, and too little on organizing those services based on the individual needs of our neighbors experiencing homelessness.

The community-wide data registry is an essential tool to improve our response to homelessness because it allows service providers that work with individuals and families to target the right kind of assistance to the right person.

It allows providers to share an understanding, for example, of who among the homeless is ill and vulnerable as to be at risk of death if their housing needs are not met. Housing can be a matter of life and death.

Prioritizing resources accordingly makes good sense, for both the person who is homeless and for our community resources like the hospitals and emergency services that will struggle (often in vain) to provide effective help to that person if he or she is not housed.

We are rolling out this innovation as part of the Connecticut’s effort to end homelessness among Veterans by 2015, and to end chronic homelessness (the long-term homelessness of people who are disabled) by 2016.

Connecticut is one of only six states in the country selected to lead zero 2015, the national campaign to achieve these twin goals. Gov. Dannel Malloy has embraced this goal, and nonprofit providers across the state are working in close partnership with their colleagues in the state government agencies central to this work.

Together, working our person as a time and helping chart the right path to housing for each person, we can end Veteran and chronic homelessness in Connecticut.

And we won’t stop there. Connecticut is also spearheading the first-in-the-nation count of homeless youth this year. This is a first step toward understanding the scope of that important problem, so that we can plan for similarly effective ways to end youth homelessness across our state.

Ending homelessness in Connecticut is not an unreachable dream — it’s a public policy goal that we must achieve. Homelessness is too costly to the people who experience it, and to our community resources (police, hospitals, schools, and emergency services) that are overstretched when they try to respond to the severe side effects of this important problem.

Through innovations like this year’s enhanced homeless count process, we are not just talking about the goal — we are moving toward it.

Lisa Tepper Bates is the executive director of the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, the statewide advocacy agency that leads the annual Point-in-Time Count of Homelessness. If you are interested in volunteering in a region for the PIT on Feb. 18, please email Jackie Jansolo at jjansolo@crtct.org for more information.
The Hour online
3/9/2015

City Briefs: League of Women Voters forum, 100-Day Efforts to End Homelessness Start Monday

The Hour online
3/9/2015

The Bulletin
3/9/2015

Eastern Connecticut taking part in challenge to end homelessness

Norwich Bulletin
3/9/2015

1,891 clicks
ART TALK, WEST HARTFORD
COMMUNITY TV
1/15/2015

LOCAL ARTISTS TAKE TOP PRIZES AT SHOW

MY TOWNS
3/1/2015

THE HARTFORD NEWS
2/12/2015

SHARING ART WITH THE COMMUNITY
Community Renewal Team added 36 new photos to the album "24 National Arts Program a Success!! — with Elizabeth McNally in Capitol Community College."

February 8, 2015

Local youth, teens, amateurs, intermediate and professional artists from Middlesex and Hartford counties participated at our 24th National Arts Program last weekend. Over 200 people visited the exhibitions and supported the artists during the awards ceremony at Capitol Community College. We would like to thank the National Arts Program Foundation for 24 years of great support!
EMAP Helps Homeowners Avoid Foreclosure

The Connecticut Housing Finance Authority and the mayors of Hartford and Wethersfield held a press conference with CRT to encourage homeowners to seek help holding on to their homes.

220 CLICKS
CHFA encourages homeowners in danger of foreclosure to apply for assistance

Page 3/5/2015

HARTFORD -- Connecticut's Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (EMAP) may be the key to helping homeowners who are facing foreclosure or have trouble making their mortgage payments due to temporary financial hardship.

West Hartford resident Norbert J. Dedurko is leading the state's efforts.

"Our goal is to help Connecticut homeowners threatened by foreclosure stay in their homes," said Dedurko. "Loans from the Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program helps keep families together, keep children in school, and reduce childhood stress.

"If you're behind on your mortgage payments or facing foreclosure, Connecticut's Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program may provide the financial assistance you need to help you catch up and stay in your home."

WEST HARTFORD NEWS
3/5/2015
Meals on Wheels Delivers Comfort to All

CRT’s Meals on Wheels program delivers hot meals, comforting words ... and sometimes pet food to seniors who are homebound.

HARTFORD MAGAZINE
3/2015
MEALS ON WHEELS driver Alonzo Byrd takes a tray of food out of the truck while volunteers wait to carry the meals inside the Enfield Senior Center.

MEALS ON WHEELS

FLAVOR INSIDE

Enfield Meals On Wheels Delivering Donations To Feed Pets

Michael Walsh

ENFIELD - The Enfield Senior Center and the Enfield Dog Park Committee are teaming up to collect donations of pet food and supplies for the Enfield Meals on Wheels program.

By Michael Walsh

ENFIELD - The Enfield Senior Center and the Enfield Dog Park Committee are teaming up to collect donations of pet food and supplies for the Enfield Meals on Wheels program.

Buam Lather, the director of the senior center, approached the dog park committee's vice president, Gregg Pugliese, about the idea for a pet food component to the program called "Animal Meals on Wheels." If you can't get out to get food for yourself or can't prepare it for yourself or can't afford it, then now you're going to be able to afford food for your pet!" Lather, who got the idea from a similar program in Danbury.

Enfield Meals on Wheels, operated by the Community Renewal Team, is run at the senior center. Every day, at about 11 a.m., a truck delivers meals and volunteers sort them before heading out on their delivery routes. Now, pets

PLEASE SEE PAGE 8

MEALS ON WHEELS

Continued from 1

food and supplies for dogs and cats will be added to that mix.

Many of the program's clients are housebound seniors who rely on the meals every day of the week. Talking with some of our Meals on Wheels volunteers, they were saying that people on their route were actually giving their meal to their cat or dog. Lather said.

Pugliese said the dog park committee is all about helping the community. Right now, they are in the middle of a pet food drive for the Enfield Senior Center.

"We're always willing to help out with pets," Pugliese said. "If you can't buy food for yourself, how are you going to afford your pet too?"

Lather said that the senior center wants to encourage seniors who are housebound to have pets.

A person receiving meals on wheels is usually housebound," Lather said. "Having a pet is a wonderful thing that we want to encourage. If we can help a person be able to maintain having a pet in their home, that's a really good thing."

Donations have already been dropped off at the senior center in the first week of announcing the collection. The dog park committee will launch a full collection on March 1.

HARTFORD COURANT

2/26/2015
Reducing Energy Costs with CRT Weatherization

Weatherization Program Helps Those in Need

By Nancy Pappas

Annie James and Maycon Curty of Hartford dreaded the arrival of winter with its dropping temperatures and rising heating bills. Even with help from the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program, this couple had to stretch their disability payments and sometimes dip into their savings to pay for their heating oil.

But in spite of the year’s record cold weather, Curty says they’re relieved this winter – about two-thirds of their usual consumption – thanks to extensive work performed in 2014 by the Community Renewal Team’s Weatherization Program. This program helps low- or moderate-income, elderly and disabled homeowners and tenants reduce the cost of heating and cooling their homes.

Owners of multi-family properties can also receive extensive weatherization if more than 60 percent of their tenants are income-qualified.

After a detailed audit to assess the condition of the James-Curty home, CRT assigned contractors to seal up leaks throughout the house and provide a new boiler, attic insulation, a bathroom vent, programmable thermostat, high-efficiency light bulb, low-flow faucets and other measures to reduce energy consumption.

At total, the couple received $8,500 worth of equipment and labor at no cost.

When CRT found that the old boiler was located in an attic, installers, they helped the couple apply for a Connecticut Housing Investment Fund loan and brought in a potential contractor to estimate the cost of removing the hazardous material. The CRT loan for $7,600 didn’t have to be repaid until the home is sold or otherwise changes ownership.

That’s an example of how weatherization providers can combine funding from multiple sources to help area residents.

Homeowners or tenants who are interested in weatherizing their homes are screened through their local Community Action Agency (CAA), which also administers the Energy Assistance programs across the state. CRT is the CAA for 40 cities and towns in Central Connecticut, from Enfield and Suffield to the Long Island Sound. Any tenant resident can call 2-1-1 to determine which of the state’s 10 CAA’s covers their town, and find a location near their home.

In 2014, CRT weatherized more than 1,900 homes, primarily in Hartford and Middlesex counties. The work was paid for by the program, which is determined by family income and the ratio of expenditure to expected savings from the conservation measures.

“By this tremendous program, but many people are completely unaware of the opportunity,” says Scott Habel, CRT’s Director of Energy Conservation.

“You’re reducing your fuel and electric bills and improving the value of your property at no cost if you meet program requirements – what could be better?”

National research shows that every basic weatherization can reduce a household’s energy usage by 20 percent.

In a Parallel note to the Weatherization Program Coordinator, Annie James expressed her gratitude for the way CRT stayed in touch throughout the process. “Getting all of this work done quite a while, but I never felt I was in it alone – I always knew that there was someone who would answer any questions and help me with the next HARTFORD COURANT 2/27/2015