



# Homes with Hope

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

## Homes with Hope Programs Combine to Provide *Life of Hope* For a Young Mother

**“This is the first year that I really feel I have people around who care for me and don’t only want something from me... For me, you are a true friend.”**  
**Alicia to her volunteer mentor**

In early 2015, Alicia and her two children, ages 5 and 3, came to stay at Homes with Hope’s family emergency shelter, the Bacharach Community, from a local Domestic Violence Crisis Center. With the help of our Emergency Shelter Services Director, Paris Looney, Alicia worked hard to put her life back in order and develop the skills she would need to maintain her family’s independence. When Paris was able to help her attain new housing in a nearby community, Alicia was both thrilled and panicked. How would they ever make it on their own?

Knowing how difficult this transition would be for her, Paris referred Alicia to our Women’s Mentoring Initiative. The program would allow Alicia to remain connected to the support she had found at Homes with Hope as well as provide ongoing emotional support. For the past ten months, Alicia and her mentor have met weekly. At those sessions her mentor mostly listens and encourages her. When Alicia becomes overwhelmed by self-doubt, her volunteer mentor reminds her of all she has accomplished.

This is easy because the list of all Alicia has achieved in ten months is impressive. Not only did Alicia brave her fears enough to finalize her divorce from her abusive ex-husband, but she completed all the requirements to become a US citizen. Her mentor says that

watching her take the Oath of Citizenship was one of the highlights of her year. Another was watching Alicia courageously share her story as the keynote speaker at a domestic violence vigil in October. She also worked to find pre-school and childcare scholarships for her children so they get the socialization they need. Alicia found a scholarship for herself and completed the coursework to become a Certified Nursing Assistant. She recently passed the CNA licensing exam and will begin a new job soon.

Alicia says that her mentor’s weekly encouragement gives her the hope and the courage she needs to fight for a better life for herself and her children. Lynn Abramson, Director of the Women’s Mentoring Initiative, says the mentoring experience has changed the lives of the clients who rely on our mentors’ friendship, and also the lives of the mentors.

If you would like to be a mentor, contact Lynn Abramson at [labramson@hwhct.org](mailto:labramson@hwhct.org).



### LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome to our 2015 Annual



Report! I hope you find that this publication tells you a lot of what Homes with Hope is doing in a readable and succinct manner. It is a challenge, because there is SO much going on. We will tell you in a few short pages:

- that we are following the goals of Zero: 2016, the federal goal to **end chronic homelessness** in America. As a leader – indeed one of a very small number – of suburban homeless shelter operators, and of permanent supportive housing providers, we are on the front lines of this effort. We have been active in collaborating with other providers in greater Norwalk to meet the needs of the most vulnerable individuals in Fairfield County, and we are making progress.
- that **we now shelter over 100 people** every night in our shelters and supportive housing. We are particularly proud that more than 45% of our shelter residents exit to a positive housing situation. That is, they do not simply go to another shelter or back on the streets. With the help of our case managers, they improve their lives; they find stable housing; and their chances for permanent success in a reasonable living arrangement are greatly enhanced. That is the strength of our programs.
- that we continue to be nearly **70%-supported by private funding sources**. That is, by you.

We cannot do this work without the help of nearly 800 residents of Westport, Weston, Wilton and surrounding communities. I am humbled by this continuing support and I salute this caring community for carrying on this work.

Thank you for your support!

Jeff Wieser  
President & CEO

3/28/2016

Homes with Hope’s mission is to support the homeless and those at-risk of homelessness in the communities we serve by providing food, safe emergency shelter, permanent supportive housing, and the supportive services needed to achieve a more independent and self-sufficient life.

**FOOD PANTRY**



Vanderbilt Chemicals volunteers take a break at the Food Pantry

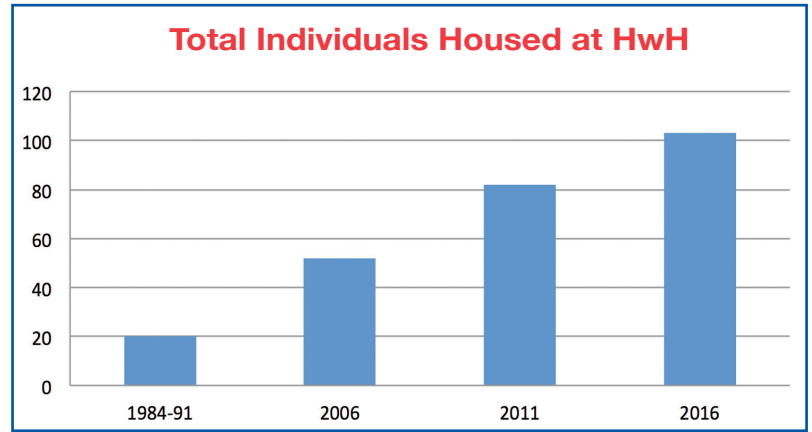
The Food Pantry is open to all who need groceries every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday from 1pm - 4pm. While donations are holding steady, demand continues to rise.

For further information call **203-226-1661**.

# Against the Odds: Housing Options Continue to Grow for HwH Clients

In 2015, Homes with Hope expanded its collaboration with Norwalk's Open Door Shelter, Family and Children's Agency, and MFAP to grow the number of options available to chronically homeless individuals and families. This Norwalk Housing First Collaborative received two major grants and 34 rental vouchers to help reduce the number of chronically homeless in our area, while ensuring that those eligible to be housed receive the professional social work needed to keep them housed. Our

favorite chart, shown here, illustrates the continuing progress that we are making, and that we can continue to make with the support of a very generous local population.



## Homes with Hope and the Staples High School Community

We were pleased to be the subject of a few articles this fall in the Staples High School award-winning newspaper, Inklings. The graphic below was featured in the December issue and spoke eloquently about the "Faces of Gillespie" and the role of our programs in expanding the diversity in our blessed community.

For the full story, by Alice Hickson and Renee Weisz, go to page 13 at: [https://issuu.com/inklingsnews/docs/12\\_6\\_issue](https://issuu.com/inklingsnews/docs/12_6_issue)

Vol. 87, Issue 4

December 9, 2015

INKLINGS

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**Page 17**  
The 75th Candlelight concert scheduled for Dec. 18-19.

**Page 12**  
Gillespie Center boasts friendly faces.

FACES OF GILLESPIE

"The Gillespie Center means a lot to me. You know, it's been here for a transition I've been going through, and it's given me support in all different ways. I'm very grateful."  
—Seamus, current Gillespie resident

"There was a point in time when my mother and myself donated food to the shelter in Stamford. Little did I know, years later, I would be on the other side. You see, you never know what life plans for you. It could happen at the snap of your fingers: you're homeless."  
—Lindsay\*, former Gillespie resident

"I would like to go as far as God and life allows me to go. It's not about a big house and fancy cars. I just would like to be able to do my deeds as a man. And for myself, I want the best out of life, and you gotta start somewhere. I'm a big dreamer who realizes that my dreams can become reality. I just gotta start somewhere."  
—George\*, current Gillespie resident

inklingsnews.com

STAPLES HIGH SCHOOL | 70 North Ave., Westport, Connecticut

Photography: Channing Smith

\*Names have been changed



# Zero: 2016 is Ending Homelessness

Homes with Hope, as part of the Norwalk Housing First Collaborative, has been very involved this year with Zero: 2016 – a federal initiative to end chronic homelessness (i.e. those who have been homeless for a year or more and have a mental health disability). Connecticut embraced the effort in January 2016 when 39 CT providers joined us in signing on to the effort under the encouragement of Governor Malloy.

The Goals of Zero: 2016 are to end Veteran and Chronic Homelessness in CT by the end of 2016. Connecticut has literally ended veteran homelessness, and we are proud to be the first state in the nation to have done so. Our next step is harder.

We think we can do it though, because we, the homeless assistance network, consciously agreed to work together, instead of in our silos. This collaboration is getting easier and more effective as time goes on. By using a

single point of entry for shelter and housing, called the Coordinated Access Network (CAN), we now have a collaborative approach to finding and housing those experiencing chronic homelessness.

It is making a difference! We have identified the 54 most vulnerable individuals experiencing homelessness in greater Norwalk and are making plans to house them in this very difficult real estate market. But we need to ramp up our efforts if we're going to meet our goals in the next 8 months!

The system being built in Connecticut has already begun to better serve those vulnerable citizens we work with every day. By being a part of this statewide effort, we are making a difference far beyond Westport, Weston and Wilton. For this, we thank our colleagues and a very generous community!

Zero: 2016

## HOMES WITH HOPE STAFF

**Jeffrey N. Wieser**  
President & CEO

**Audrey Sparre, MA**  
Vice President & COO  
Director of Supportive Housing Operations

**Karen Mahar**  
Director of Resource Development

**Jacqueline Hogan**  
Director of Finance & Controller

**Maureen Liebergall**  
Community Relations Coordinator

## PROGRAM STAFF

**Paris Looney, MSW**  
Director of Emergency Shelter Services  
Program Director, Bacharach Community

**Lynn Abramson, MA**  
Program Director, Women's Mentoring Initiative

**Jamila Daniel, LMSW**  
Case Manager, Fair Street & Hales Court

**Chynna Edmond, MSW**  
Case Manager, Norwalk Housing First Collaborative

**Wendy Epstein, LCSW**  
Case Manager, Westport Rotary Centennial House & Hayes Avenue

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**Ray Kalinowski**  
Supervisor, Gillespie Center & Hoskins Place

**Rob Lockhart, LMSW**  
Program Director, Gillespie Center & Hoskins Place

**Kelly McLaughlin**  
Supervisor, Gillespie Center & Hoskins Place

**Robynne Quinn, LCSW**  
Case Manager, Powell Place, Sasco Creek & CT RRP

**Caroline Tanski, MSW**  
Case Manager, Gillespie Center & Hoskins Place

## FINANCIALS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED 12/31/2015

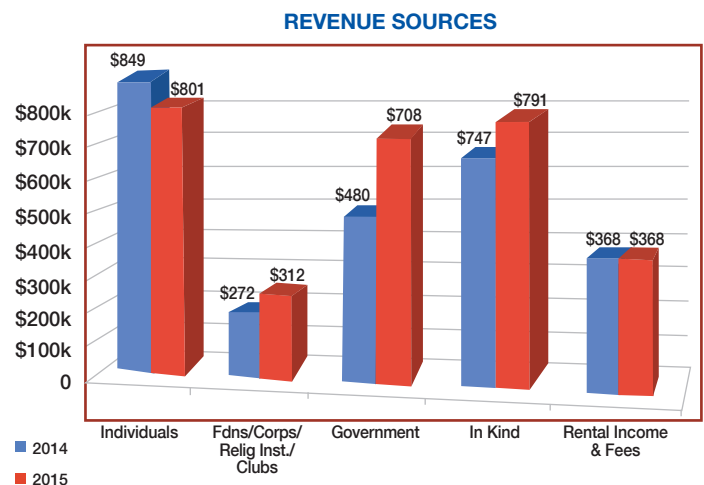
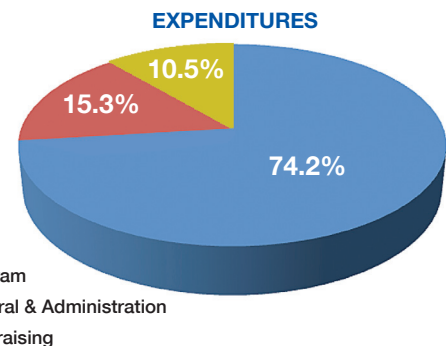
Thanks to a very generous community, 2015 was a good year for Homes with Hope, and as a consequence we continued to expand our services to a larger number of homeless clients.

Our revenues grew 8.5% to \$2.97 million. Combined contributions from Individuals, Foundations, Corporations and Religious Institutions were essentially flat at \$1.112 million, while government revenue sources climbed 47% to \$708,000 as a result of successful grant awards we received in 2015. With these awards, mainly through the Norwalk Housing First Collaborative, we were able to expand the number of our Permanent Supportive Housing units and the services we offer the clients who reside in them.

In-Kind revenues grew 6%, largely due to a strong year for donations to the Food Pantry, as well as continuing community involvement in the Community Kitchen.

Total expenses were up an unusual 12.1%, largely due to personnel expenses associated with the increased government grants, and expenses related to a few management initiatives: we expanded our website in 2015, and we added new donor database software which has been of tremendous value to the organization. Importantly, the percentage of expenses that go directly to programs rose again this year to 74.2%, up from 73.2% in 2014. This remains an important benchmark which we are committed to increasing, as we strive to make donation dollars go as far as possible toward ending homelessness in lower Fairfield County. Fundraising costs declined to 10.5% from 11.2% in the previous year, as did General & Administrative costs, declining to 15.3% from 15.6% in 2014.

Our combined results showed a small deficit for the year of \$60,360. This result included \$170,895 of non-cash depreciation, and our cash position improved by \$41,000. We remain poised to continue our growth, as we continue to search for more ways to expand the housing options we can provide to our homeless clients.



For a copy of our audited statements or Form 990, please call the office, or visit our website, [www.hwhct.org](http://www.hwhct.org).



# Homes with Hope

49 Richmondville Ave. • Suite 112 • Westport, CT 06880  
203-226-3426 • [www.hwhct.org](http://www.hwhct.org)

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Bruce Hennemuth, *Treasurer*

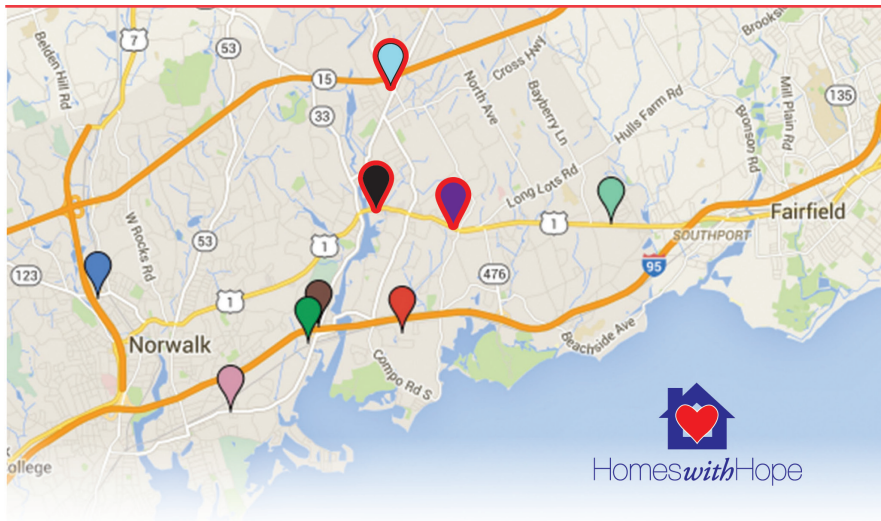
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**SAVE THE DATE**  
**STAND UP FOR HwH**  
**TBA - NOV. 12TH!**

Graphic Design: Tammy Hines Design

# HOMES with HOPE - ANNUAL REPORT 2015



## EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAMS



**Gillespie Center & Hoskins Place**  
*Single Men and Women's Shelter*  
Westport



**Bacharach Community**  
*Shelter for Single Mothers and their Children*  
Westport



**Linxweiler House**  
*Extension of the Bacharach Community*  
Westport

Tom Kretsch

## PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING



**Fair Street Apartments**  
Norwalk



**Westport Rotary Centennial House**  
Westport



**Sasco Creek Village** – Westport



**Hayes Avenue**  
Norwalk



**Powell Place**  
Westport



**Hales Court**  
Westport

Tom Kretsch

Visit our website: [www.hwhct.org](http://www.hwhct.org)

# 2015 DONOR LISTING

## INDIVIDUALS

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Joseph & Paula Ziskin



The ABC "Dream Team" serve at Gillespie!

### \$500 - \$999

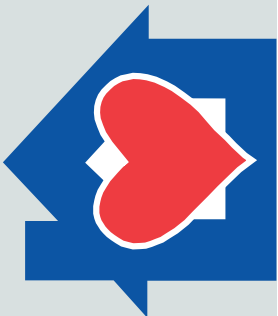
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Anthony & Sarah Menchaca  
Jean Pierre & Sara Montillier  
Max & Kathi Moran



The Judges and First Selectman Jim Marpe deliberate at Castles in the Sand

*Solving homelessness in our communities through supportive housing*

HOMES WITH HOPE





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**Volunteers Make the Day at the 2015 Stand Up for HwH**

**\$100 - \$249**

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 Rosemarie Costello  
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 Holly Crouch  
 Richard & Sally Cummings  
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 Jo Ann Davidson  
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**Westport Wash & Wax presents the check from the 15th Good Neighbor Day**

We try SO HARD to make sure this listing is accurate. **Please** let us know if it is not !!!

