



Holiday Edition, 2008

Volume 1, Issue 2



Ending Homelessness One Person at a Time.

Inside this issue:

- Adopt-A Family **2**
- Foreclosure News **2**
- On-line Donations **2**
- The Street Retreat **3**
- Board Spotlight **3**
- Shelter Needs **4**

SOAR Initiative Arrives in New Mexico

In August, Healthcare for the Homeless and St. Martin's funded tuition for Karen Navarro, Client Advocate and Lisa Chavez, Case Manager, to attend a four-day "Stepping Stones to Recovery Train-the-Trainer" conference in Chicago, Illinois. The conference was offered by Policy Research Associates. SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Advocacy & Recovery) is a federal initiative in 34 states. This initiative has a proven record of cutting through the red tape for quick approval of Social Security Insurance and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSI and SSDI), the results of which are rapid benefits for homeless individuals the first time they apply.

At the "Train-the-Trainer" conference, Karen and Lisa were given all of the tools to do a two-day training of medical and social service providers about the SSI/SSDI application process. There was a strong focus on being proactive at expediting clients' applications. Key elements are: 1) engaging the applicant to collect more detailed functional disability information; 2) collecting comprehensive medical information; and, 3) working closely with the Social Se-



Margaret Lassiter, Lisa Chavez, Karen Navarro (Top L-L), Yvette Perret and Deborah Dennis (Bottom L-R)

curity office and the state Disability Determination Services office. Those offices are responsible for determination of disability. It is important to point out that mental illness is particularly difficult to document on many applications, especially with those who are homeless.

The SOAR process allows individuals to quickly receive needed income, which helps them get off of the streets with monthly payments from SSI and/or SSDI. This initiative also enables recipients better access to medical care through Medicaid and/or Medicare.

These initiatives have far-reaching positive impacts and are, importantly, a "win-win" for hospitals. Hospitals may be compensated for 90 days' retroactive medical expenses for individuals

who access Medicaid. For the state human services departments budgets are improved because the General Assistance payments per individual are reduced. This reduction comes from homeless individuals receiving approval for SSI or SSDI benefits.

On December 11, 2008, New Mexico will form a steering committee to help establish a pilot SOAR project. Through this steering committee funding will be made available to train the first medical and social service providers in the community. Along with Yvonne Perret MSW (who began the first SOAR pilot project in the nation), Karen and Lisa will train those providers. That training begins the week of February 24, 2009.



Lisa Chavez, Case Manager (L) and Karen Navarro, Client Advocate (R), outside St. Martin's Hospitality Center.

INSIDE: Holiday Adopt-A-Family Program and The Street Retreat!



Adopt a family and help make a positive and profound difference in the lives of others today!

Holiday Adopt-A-Family Program

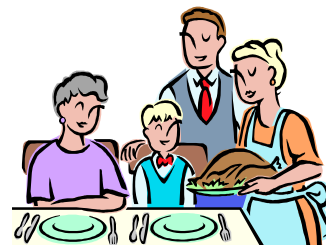
Each year, for the past several years, St. Martin's has connected families in need with sponsors for gifts and food during the holidays. Last year, a total of 219 children, and over 50 families were assisted through St. Martin's Adopt-A-Family Program by 41 sponsors. With our national soft economy, we anticipate upwards of 300 Albuquerque families will need assistance meeting very basic needs of food, clothing and toys this holiday season.

To be eligible to receive benefits from this program, families must be referred by their accepted agency case worker.

If you are interested in adopting a needy family as a sponsor/donor, please contact Valerie Armendariz at 505-797-2361 or email Valerie at varmendariz @ Comcast .net.

We extend our deep appreciation to all of those who have helped make this a successful community

program in the past and hope that we can count on your assistance again this year. Please remember your donations or financial contributions to the Adopt-A-Family Program are completely tax deductible!



Housing Foreclosures Up 71%

CBS News reported on October 23, 2008 that US Foreclosure Rates Continue to Climb. And, this translates to our community with an increase in those who are experiencing housing foreclosures, as well. Albuquerque is witnessing its share of rising foreclosures.

Look through any city's Sunday paper in the Real Estate Section and it is not uncommon to read ads of homes that are selling for a fraction of the equity the owners have invested. What does this mean?, many people ask. Part of what it

means is that families are desperate to salvage their credit and avoid foreclosure. Many families would rather get out from under a burdensome mortgage payment by "giving" their equity away. They do this by finding someone to assume the payments because they are no longer able to pay their mortgage, the bills and still have enough left over to buy food.

An underlying message covertly spoken in these ads is that many families are potentially just a month or two away from

becoming St. Martin's newest clients. They make their mortgage payment, they pay their utility bills, but they have no money left over afterwards to buy groceries or gas.

At St. Martin's, the client demographic is changing in direct proportion to the mortgage crisis. For the first time in our agency's 23 year history, we are beseeched more frequently to assist college educated heads of household. What would you do if your house were in foreclosure? Who helps during these troubled times? St. Martin's does!

On-line Donations

Finally! St. Martin's is now able to accept your donations on-line. It's not very pretty yet and we're still working on it, yet we are finally capable of accepting donations online. Please visit our still 'under con-

struction' website at www.smhc-nm.org and click on the "donation" link to save your stamp and instantly forward your fully tax-deductible donation.

Please be advised that we've set up the donation through PayPal—one of THE

most trusted and secure on-line payment processing options. Feel completely at ease entering your most confidential information through our PayPal portal. And, as always, thank you for partnering with us to end homelessness!



St. Martin's Signature Event — *The Street Retreat!*

On January 28, 2009 St. Martin's will launch its signature mission-driven fund-raising event: The Street Retreat.

The Street Retreat is an opportunity for twelve participants to begin a profound and revealing journey—a journey into streets of Albuquerque for three days and two nights to live as any number of local street dwellers lives each and every day of his or her life.

What better time of year to learn empathy for those less fortunate than getting a full-on view during some of Albuquerque's coldest days and

even colder nights?!

Street dwelling is humbling and compelling and provides participants various levels of humility through living in "the unknown".

Likewise, street dwelling is an opportunity to be so internally moved as to depart the experience and then foster community awareness from one's on first-hand experiences on the issue of homelessness.

Please consider joining us for an opportunity to see life from an angle that is becoming more commonplace throughout mainstream America. See, first-hand

what many of our friends, neighbors and family members experience after they have lost their home to the escalating numbers of foreclosures

Funds raised from this event are placed in St. Martin's unrestricted account in order to meet the greatest needs and bridge the gap left by dwindling grants.

If you would like to learn more about The Street Retreat, or would like to participate, please contact Tracy Alexis at 242-4399 extension 236. You may also email Tracy at talexis@smhcnm.org.



On any given night in Albuquerque, over 3,500 men, women and children are homeless. Those numbers are increasing. Please join us in this important two-fold crusade: (1) help build community awareness around the severity of Albuquerque's homelessness issue; and, (2) help raise funds to end homelessness.

Board Member Spotlight

Bank of the West's Commercial Banking Vice President Tracy Quevedo this month presented St. Martin's Hospitality Center's Development Director, Tracy Alexis with a check for \$3,000. The donation will help fund support for various programs and services offered to the homeless and disenfranchised through St. Martin's assistance opportunities.

"Bank of the West believes that we have an important role to play in the development and growth of the

communities in which we live and work," said Quevedo, who serves on the St. Martin's Board of Directors. "We're pleased to make this contribution which helps St. Martin's reach out to the homeless and disenfranchised to provide them with much-needed services."

Bank of the West was founded in 1874 and has \$63.3 billion in assets. To learn more visit: www.bankofthewest.com. Bank of the West offers a full range of business, corpo-

rate, personal, trust and international banking services and currently operates more than 700 retail and commercial banking locations in 19 Western and Midwestern states. The bank has set a goal to provide \$75 billion by 2015 in loans, investments, service contracts and contributions for businesses, individuals and organizations serving or located in lower income communities within 19 states.

**"People who are homeless are not social inadequates. They are people without homes."
Sheila McKechnie**

St. Martin's Comprehensive Recovery Treatment program helps families toward self-sufficiency. This program needs household items such as dishes, flatware, and pots/pans to help those transitioning into their own apartment. Also helpful is shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, toilet paper, paper towels, Clorox, cleanser, disinfectant, trash bags, blankets, sheets, pillows and towels. Gently used is welcome!

RETURN ADDRESS:
St. Martin's Hospitality Center
A Non-Profit Organization
P.O. Box 27258
Albuquerque, NM 87125

Phone: 505-242-4399
Fax: 505-242-4861
E-mail: info@smhc-nm.org

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
ALBUQUERQUE, NM
PERMIT NO. 1590

**Ending homelessness one
person at a time!**

www.smhc-nm.org

Shelter Needs

During the colder months, the needs of those served through St. Martin's day shelter shift toward warmer items.

We are currently in need of sleeping bags, blankets, socks, gloves, beanies and men's and women's leather shoes or boots.

From the clients we serve to the dedicated professionals who serve them, we thank you for your continued support and wish you and yours a very happy, safe, warm and peaceful holiday season!

St. Martin's is proud of the manner in which it stewards each and every donation received. For the past 23 years, we've worked diligently to ensure that no less than eighty-seven percent (87%) of every donation goes directly to benefit clients' numerous needs. That's better than most national and international non-profit organizations.

**Please remember that all donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.
We invite everyone to tour our facilities.**