

news from Columbus House

the way home

Looking for Solutions

Much of our funding comes from government sources, and much of that from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In the past year, HUD has issued new guidelines for all programs that serve people who are homeless, including emergency shelter and permanent housing providers. These new guidelines are included in the HEARTH Act – Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing, which *continued on page 3...*



Since we opened our doors in 1982, clients have had to line up at the emergency shelter to partake in the lottery system to get a bed and services each night. As of July 1, 2013, this system will no longer be in place. Clients admitted on July 1st will be able to stay for 90 days as long as they come in each day at 4pm. This “Rapid Exit” program will include intensive case management services to help people move into more appropriate housing. (Right photo does not depict actual clients or staff.)

Community Collaboration:

Simply Sharing, Bob’s Furniture & Columbus House

Simply Sharing is an organization with a mission to provide basic furniture, household goods, and occasional interior design input to individuals and families transitioning from homelessness to sustainable and supportive housing.

both our emergency shelter sites in New Haven and Middlesex Counties. Bob’s Discount Furniture, a longtime supporter of Columbus House, recently announced a partnership with Simply Sharing. Since their partnership began last October, Bob’s and Simply Sharing have provided over 50 pieces of furniture to more than a dozen families with children, Veterans and individuals moving from homeless shelters into transitional and permanent supportive housing.

“When someone first moves out of a shelter, the money they’re earning usually doesn’t go very far, and many can’t afford furnishings.”

furnishings,” said Alison Brinkman, Simply Sharing’s president and founder. Her program recently helped a single mother with three small children who moved into a home with no furniture – not even *continued on page 3...*

In addition to helping those moving to their own place, Simply Sharing also supports Columbus House by providing much needed furniture for

“When someone first moves out of a shelter, the money they’re earning usually doesn’t go very far, and many can’t afford

inside

- In-kind donations 2
- 17th Annual Orange Congregational Church Paul Ode Memorial Golf Tournament 2
- SAVE THE DATE!
1st Annual Knights of Columbus Golf Tournament 3

Donations of Clothing, Furniture & Food

What do we need? How can you help?

Before arriving with an in-kind or food donation, please call Sheree at (203) 401-4400, ext. 138 or email sdimario@columbushouse.org.



In addition to financial contributions, you have helped those we serve by providing valuable volunteer support, gift cards to restaurants and retail stores, new socks, underwear, office supplies and food. We couldn't help as many as we do without your thoughtful support.

The development department, which handles all donations, volunteer coordination and communications, would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all you have done to support our mission and to remind you of some important details regarding non-financial or "in-kind" donations.

IN KIND DONATIONS

We are always in need of several wish list items such as new socks and new underwear, and gift cards. However, due to a severe lack of space, Columbus House dramatically curtailed our acceptance of most clothing items and formed a partnership with **Easter Seals/Goodwill** so that most clothing donations are


directed to their facilities since they have the staff, expertise and most importantly the storage space to sort, inventory and distribute clothing on a mass scale. Our clients have access to those facilities and can obtain clothing items, free of charge, with a referral from their case manager.


Similarly, we direct our furniture donations to the **Furniture Co-op** and **Helping Hands** as they too are better equipped to store, inventory, and distribute furniture. For a small fee, clients can secure furniture at either organization. Helping Hands is a thrift store and a portion of all goods sold that were donated, on behalf of Columbus House, comes back to us so we can help more people move out of homelessness.


FOOD DONATIONS

With an increased focus on client safety, we have instituted some new food donation guidelines that we hope you will agree are in the best interest of the over 100 clients per night that we serve (over

175 in the winter!) These policies may be different from what you have been used to in the past.

 We ask that all **leftover food** from office and house parties be shared with your guests and not brought to Columbus House. By the time it gets to us and then by the time we might be able to serve it, too much time has passed and there are real safety concerns.

 **Perishable food** items are also a challenge due to temperature and storage concerns. We would ask that those items also not be brought to the shelter.

 **Non-perishable food** items like canned soup, pasta, rice, cereal, etc., are needed on an occasional basis. In order to save you the time and expense of transporting certain donations to Columbus House, we ask that you **please call Sheree at (203) 401-4400, ext. 138 before arriving** so that we can discuss your donation and ascertain whether there is a current need for those items.

If we can't take your item(s) due to food safety concerns or lack of space, we will, to the best of our ability, direct you to one of the other agencies in town that might be able to accept your donation.

Thank you for your help!



Summer is here and our clients are in the need of essentials such as **sunblock, insect repellent, and cases of bottled water**. For a complete wish list of the items most needed please visit our website at www.columbushouse.org/news and click on "wish list."



The 17th Annual Orange Congregational Church Paul Ode Memorial Golf Tournament was June 21st. Thank you to all who made this wonderful day of golf to benefit Columbus House possible!



beds to sleep on. With Bob's assistance, however, the family received four beds, as well as a sofa and chairs, while Simply Sharing provided dishes, pots, pans, glasses and other kitchen supplies.

With the goal of helping people all over Connecticut, thus far Simply Sharing has mainly been working closely with Columbus House. For example, they just recently provided 14 couches to our program shelter sites in New Haven and Middlesex Counties. To help support this

important collaboration, Columbus House secures volunteers and vehicles for each furniture delivery.

"For an individual or family overcoming the struggles of homelessness, Simply Sharing provides a tremendous resource for the basic necessity of furniture. Alison's attention to detail, such as age and gender-specific bedding for children, really makes each family feel secure and welcomed into their new home," explains John Brooks, Director of Development.

Simply Sharing is sponsored by the Community Foundation of Middlesex County, which provides oversight and administrative support, and accepts donations on behalf of the program. To find out more about this collaboration and each partnering agency, visit www.columbushouse.org/news. ■

Looking for Solutions...continued from page 1

provides key changes in definitions of homelessness, changes in eligible activities within HUD funded programs, and requires new performance criteria. The goal is an end to chronic homelessness and Veteran homelessness within 5 years, an end to family homelessness in 10 years and a path to reduce and ultimately end all homelessness.

What does this mean for Columbus House?

There will be changes rolling out over time, but the most immediate change will be very visible to those visiting the shelter. Clients will no longer be required to line up or to participate in the lottery system in order to get a bed and services at the emergency shelter. This system has been in place since we opened our doors in 1982. If you have been here at the shelter around 4:00pm on any given day, you would see men and women waiting in line, rain or shine, snow or 100 degree heat, hoping to get a bed. Most do get a bed; some don't. But this system has created unnecessary anxiety every day for those we help.

On July 1, we will do away with the lottery system and will utilize a rolling admission process. Clients who are admitted on July

1 will be able to stay for 90 days without having to stand in line or participate in a lottery to secure a bed at the shelter. Their admission is guaranteed as long as they come in each day at 4pm. Those who do not get in on that day will be put on a wait list and will be called on their cellphone (Yes, most people have a cellphone!) as soon as a bed becomes available.

We are keeping the same number of beds as we had in the lottery system, so there will be no fewer and no more turn-aways because of this change in admissions.

This is a welcome change for all of us. It creates a much more humane and less stressful manner of admitting people into the shelter. In addition, we will initiate a "Rapid Exit" program that will include intensive case management services to help people move quickly out of the shelter and into more appropriate housing.

These changes, along with others that will be introduced over the next year, will reduce the number of people who are homeless and will get us closer to achieving our goal of one day ending homelessness. ■



SAVE THE DATE!

SEPTEMBER 11, 2013

for the
FIRST ANNUAL KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
Hon. W. Patrick Donlin Assembly #2459
GOLF TOURNAMENT

to be held at
THE COUNTRY CLUB OF WOODBRIDGE
50 Woodfield Road, Woodbridge, CT

to benefit
"The Homefront for Homeless Veterans"
(a program of Columbus House)
and Patriotic Causes

for more info
www.wpatrickdonlin-2459.com
or contact Ric Raffone: (203) 640-6482

www.columbushouse.org

Want to learn more about how you are making a difference?

Sign up for our new monthly E-News! Go to www.columbushouse.org

Join Our Email List 

and click on "Join Our Email List" in the bottom left-hand corner.



P.O. Box 7093
586 Ella T. Grasso Boulevard
New Haven, CT 06519

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 13
New Haven, CT

Address Service Requested

Help us reduce our postage costs!
If you receive more than one copy
or are listed incorrectly, let us know.
Call (203) 401-4400, ext. 138 or
email info@columbushouse.org.

Like us!

facebook

[facebook.com/
columbushouseinc](http://facebook.com/columbushouseinc)

Paying It Forward

Your generosity not only changes lives but also inspires others to pay it forward. On the right is a note from a client who is now also a donor. Amazing!

Continue this momentum by making a gift today.

Who inspires you?

Make your gift in honor of Mark or someone special in your life.

To make your gift online today, please visit www.columbushouse.org/donation.

Thank you!

May 28, 2013

I would like to Thank all the Staff at the Columbus House for being there for me when i became homeless. And a very Special Thank you to "Kenny Priffin" who helped me out the most, and Rebekah Ohlsen as well.

Enclosed you will receive a Money Order for \$150.00 that i am donating to the Columbus House.

Today i am no longer homeless and have a home of my own, thanks to the Support given to me by the Staff at the Columbus House.

Forever Grateful,

Mark