



Coalition on a Mission

a monthly newsletter of the Supportive Housing Coalition of New Mexico

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Love, Healing, Hope One Couple's Journey



"We're not on the streets anymore because of you."

Like many of our clients, Richard and Margaret had it all, a home, jobs, and a plan for their future. Margaret, born and raised in Albuquerque, grew up in a loving home and raised two children on her own. Richard, a talented goldsmith, was devoted to his family, loved to cook, and had dreams of opening his own jewelry business. "Our first date was on my birthday," Richard explains with a big grin, "it took me a year to have her agree to move in with me because she wanted to wait until her kids were out of the house." As soon as she was able, Margaret moved into the house Richard was renting from his mom. Together they made many improvements to the house, worked at their respective jobs, built Richard's workshop, and saved money for the day that Richard could open his own business in the jewelry industry. Eventually Margaret left her job so she could help Richard set up his business. They were full of excitement and hope for their new venture.

Then came the foreclosure notice. Richard and Margaret had been paying rent to his mom who, because of a severe gambling addiction, never paid the mortgage. They stayed as long as they could but were ultimately evicted from their home, able to leave with just the clothes on their back and what little they could fit in their cars. "He lost his workshop, his whole life, everything. I was devastated," says Margaret, "we were locked out and couldn't return to get our things, and we left behind thousands of dollars in tools." The

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SHC-NM and the Albuquerque Heading Home Initiative

Supportive Housing Coalition of New Mexico is the provider of housing for Albuquerque Heading Home (AHH), a unique collaborative initiated by the City of Albuquerque and Mayor Berry designed to address chronic homelessness. Our organization works with the collaboration to immediately house the most vulnerable citizens of our city without duplicating services. The coordinated effort of multiple partners specializing in outreach, referrals, housing, case management, and other supportive services allows SHC-NM to do what we do best, place people quickly and efficiently in safe and affordable housing.

So what does it mean to provide housing for AHH? SHC-NM is responsible for managing the housing vouchers for the program. Upon referral to our Community Housing Program, applicants meet with our highly qualified Housing Specialists who ensure eligibility of the applicant, conduct intake assessments, provide apartment options, calculate rent, approve the unit, establish and maintain relationships with landlords, conduct unit inspections,

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Save the Date!

5th Annual
Strike Out
Homelessness



09.30.17

SHC SUPPORTIVE
HOUSING
COALITION
of New Mexico



Love, Healing, Hope

(continued)

money they had saved now went to hotel rooms, paying their bills, and surviving while they looked for other options. The money ran out in a few months so they lived out of their car. But then the car finally broke down.

“We didn’t know about shelters. Mostly we walked around, wasted time by riding the bus, camped here and there, made sure we avoided the police,” they explain. What was the most difficult for both of them was the way that even with the good reputation they had, “people assumed we were criminals, even our family.” Margaret explains dejectedly, “Even my mom thought we had done this to ourselves. With all the sadness I was going through, it was awful to have Mom feel that way about me.”

“We’re not on the streets anymore because of you.”

~Richard

After 22 months of homelessness, Richard and Margaret were referred to and permanently housed by SHC-NM through the Community Housing program. “You guys were so great, so helpful,” says Richard, “We’re not on the streets anymore because of you. You know, the hardest part about being homeless is the isolation, not knowing who to turn to, knowing your family was right down the street and not being able to turn to them.”

Now that they are housed, Margaret and Richard are taking charge of their lives once again. Margaret makes jewelry that they sell to help make ends meet. And they are a vibrant part of their community, volunteering at the church that Margaret grew up in, assisting with food preparation and handing out food baskets at a local resource center, and most recently starting a greenhouse project where they hope to grow enough food to distribute at the church’s food pantry. Most importantly, they are able to start making plans for their future once again. Richard would like to go back to school and Margaret wants to continue with her jewelry business. In the meantime Margaret is reconnecting with her mom and Richard is healing from the betrayal he experienced from his family. “I’ve learned to let go of my anger about everything that happened to me. I had to for my own health and well-being. I’m learning how to take care of myself and to put my relationship with Margaret first.”

SHC-NM and AHH

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Trina Lopez, Housing Specialist, assists Anthony with his paperwork

schedule and conduct the lease signings, and provide support to the newly housed participant.

Since 2005, SHC-NM has worked with over 338 landlords in the metro area and currently has working relationships with 150 property managers across the metropolitan area who accept the housing vouchers. Once housed, SHC-NM collects the tenant portion of the rent, if any, and then pays rent directly to the landlord. This helps us maintain regular client contact and assures the landlord that rent will be paid.

Ongoing support is crucial to the success of our clients. Housing inspections are conducted at six months, one year, and annually thereafter. SHC-NM conducts ongoing communication and coordination with service agency staff to discuss needs and issues of participants as they arise and develop action plans if needed.

SHC-NM has successfully operated the City of Albuquerque rental assistance program since its beginnings in 2005 and the AHH initiative since 2011. We have played a critical role in ending homelessness for hundreds of participants with a 90% success rate in housing stability. We are proud to be a part of this highly successful effort.

Help us end homelessness for good!

SHC-NM provides permanent supportive housing for over 700 individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at risk for homelessness.

Donate at www.shcnm.org/donations
or mail to

P.O. Box 27459, Albuquerque, NM 87125