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Following a model from the National Coalition for the Homeless, our monthly topics may include:
- Family / Youth homelessness,
- Elder homelessness,
- LGBTQ homelessness,
- Veteran homelessness, -Criminalization

Using multi-media: TV, Radio, Youtube, Facebook, etc., we did it. On Tuesday, August 29, community leaders who represented homeless youth, children in poverty, law enforcement and ACCESS to have a community discussion on solutions, to build a Self-Healing Community using trauma-informed strategies to do this together. The Honorable Peter Buckley led the discussion on using strategies and the panel shared how this would work in community.

Through August 14, 2017 we have reached 96.7% of all adults in 9 counties an average of 36 times.

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Warming Shelter — Finally!

Local Non-Profit Rogue Retreat open and operate an emergency warming shelter for the first time in many years for the homeless in Medford from January 1-March 31, 2017.

They averaged just over 50 people a night (due to City limitations) during the 90 days. These individuals had a warm place to sleep, a warm meal, rest room facilities and contact with other agencies that provided care and support. The Kelly Shelter served people from their teen years to well into their 80's. All were homeless for various reasons and would have been on the streets during the cold weather if not for the shelter. Many lessons were learned as challenges often threatened to close the shelter down. The City of Medford remained flexible, yet firm in making sure the shelter met its purpose while also assuring safety of the participants and neighbors.

Motel vouchers also became critical as more families were needed a safe, warm temporary space out of the cold.

For more information:
https://youtu.be/CYjL70KQPco

Day Youth Shelter Renovated

“Our homeless youth are incredibly valuable to our community and they are worth investing in. They deserve the best. This renovation is another way to show that.” – Mary Ferrell, Maslow Project’s Executive Director

A small room, just 200 square feet, at the back of Kid’s Unlimited was Maslow Project’s first official home. Simply a metal door leading to the Resource Center where homeless youth and families could access food, clothing, hygiene supplies, and meet with the staff that would offer encouragement and hope as they worked toward their goals. It was a threshold to the first steps taken toward a more stable life. Maslow Project has come a long way from that small and limited space. Filling the old school district building in the heart of downtown Medford has meant even more students and families experiencing homelessness have access to services they need to survive. Our staff has grown and Maslow Project is now a permanent part of the Southern Oregon community. For the past 6 years Maslow Project has worked diligently within the 70-year-old building and the time had come for an update to the well-worn space.

Support from a grant through ACCESS and several private donors has filled this need by investing in a renovation project to improve Maslow Project’s Medford Resource Center.

The process has not been easy but it has been worth it! Our Resource Center is now a space where homeless youth and families feel proud to belong, knowing that they are safe and supported, by Maslow, and by the community that makes our work possible!

For statistics on Jackson County Youth Homelessness, watch:
https://youtu.be/ydjzssBVCsg

“Poverty is not an accident. Like slavery and apartheid, it is man-made and can be removed by the actions of human beings.” – Nelson Mandela

Thank You OHCS!

“Thank you for believing in youth and investing in our future!”

Mary Ferrell, Executive Director

“I was homeless for several years and in my struggles to get a job, I knew I had a home in Maslow Project. I was able to work on my goals and dreams and now I'm ready to start my own business.”

- Ali, former youth client

“Maslow Project is a beacon of hope for homeless youth and families. The Resource Center is a safe, warm and welcoming place where youth can access the tools they need to get their lives back on track.”

- Linda, former youth client

“For me, the Resource Center was an eye-opener. I didn’t realize that so many services were available. I was able to access food, clothing, hygiene supplies and meet with staff who supported me as I worked toward my goals.”

- Jennifer, former youth client

“Maslow Project has had a profound impact on my life. The Resource Center is a safe, welcoming place where youth and families can access the tools they need to get their lives back on track.”

- John, former youth client

“Maslow Project is more than a shelter. It’s a place where youth and families can access food, clothing, hygiene supplies and meet with staff who offer encouragement and hope as they work toward their goals. It’s a threshold to the first steps taken toward a more stable life.”

- Mike, former youth client

“Maslow Project’s Resource Center is a beacon of hope for homeless youth and families. It’s a safe, warm and welcoming place where youth can access the tools they need to get their lives back on track.”

- Susan, former youth client

“Maslow Project has come a long way from that small and limited space. Filling the old school district building in the heart of downtown Medford has meant even more students and families experiencing homelessness have access to services they need to survive. Our staff has grown and Maslow Project is now a permanent part of the Southern Oregon community.”

- Mary Ferrell, Executive Director
CoC and Coordinated Entry — A Great Need to Succeed

**CoC:** ACCESS is the lead agency for COC-502. ACCESS has not had the capacity over the last years to build and strengthen the foundation of our COC and this was recently reflected in a recent HUD audit. Our COC team feels that we cannot catch up to meet some of the minimum requirements for COC’s and continue to lose HUD funds. With OHCS help requests we hired a consultant to investigate our status, create and implement the steps necessary to bring us up to required COC standards.

**Coordinated Entry:** As required by both HUD and the VA, COC’s are expected to use a coordinate entry system. In Jackson County, we have a paper referral process, but no process to review the needs of those needing assistance and then coordinating our efforts across agencies. Having the Support Services for Veteran Families, ACCESS has had the opportunity to start moving more into a coordinate entry process, but we need help. OHCS funds gave us the opportunity to take steps to meet the upcoming deadline from HUD.

**Accomplishments:**

- Developed a Continuum of Care (CoC) structure that better ensures continued Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding to alleviate homelessness in Jackson County through a coordinated and engaged system of services.

- Clarified the roles and relationships of the Jackson County Community Services Consortium, the Homeless Task Force, and ACCESS in supporting the Jackson County CoC.

- Made extensive contact and generated a body of community leaders (CoC Board) committed to working through the HUD CoC structure to better understand and address homelessness in Jackson County.

- Reviewed, updated and gained support for a governance charter to guide the board in its mission and actions.

- Developed a process to continue to communicate CoC efforts and opportunities for interested parties and agencies to engage.

- Produced operating documents, including a Jackson County Coordinated Entry process, and implement steps to begin coordinated entry to meet CoC requirements.

- “When you better the lives of others, you better your own life.” – I.M. Sulzbacher

**So Close to Homeless Forum Taping — Shown Primetime on September 21, 2017**
PHOENIX — A two-alarm fire displaced the residents of a Phoenix apartment complex and destroyed one of the units Saturday, according to fire officials.

Crews from Jackson County Fire District No. 5 responded to emergency reports about the blaze at 1:32 p.m., according to dispatch logs. A fire had been reported in one of the apartment units, firefighter Dan Hall said. All residents made it out safely.

ACCESS Steps In to Help

Twenty-one individuals were misplaced by recent fire. The Red Cross and United Way stepped in immediately to help support these individuals and family for only a couple of days. With the help of OHCS SHAP funds, ACCESS was able to step in and help with temporary hotel stays during this winter season.

With both SHAP and EHA funds, we hired a case manager to work with each displaced family to find new housing if that was their choice. Using our rental assistance programs structure, we were able to both assist with deposits and short-term rental assistance for those moving to new locations, and to temporary assist those choosing to return to their home one the complex was repaired.

Point in Time

Our success in completing the HUD annual Point-in-Time Count was partially due to OHCS funds that allowed us to purchase outreach items to give to the homeless we talked to that evening. Items included such things as:

- backpacks, blankets, socks, warm clothing, hygiene kits, pet food, and much more.
ACCESS, The City of Medford and our HUD TA worked together and presented a winter series of topics for elected and appointed officials, other policy makers, contractors, banks, property owners and other community members who can take action to end homelessness in Jackson County.

We had two successful daylong events in December and January culminating in a Jackson County Forum in February. Funds for these events are shared between OHCS, ACCESS, The City of Medford and HUD TA funds with the expectation that we find sponsors for training locations, food, etc. The topics included:

Understanding and the core elements of Housing First, harm reduction and stages of change.

Learning the six effective approaches to gain community acceptance and reduce neighborhood opposition (Not in My Backyard or NIMBY) for new supportive and affordable housing development.

55 percent of renters in Oregon pay more than 30 percent of their income to housing, leaving too little to cover other fundamental costs.

Oregon is the 3rd most unfavorable rental market in the United States, according to the National Low Income Coalition.

http://habitatoregon.org/affiliates/oregons-housing-crisis/

“What we see out there is an affordable housing crisis, particularly in the rental market in cities big and small, and we don’t have the resources necessary to fill that gap.”

~ Julián Castro, U.S. Secretary of Housing & Urban Development
On behalf of ACCESS and our entire Jackson County community, thank you Oregon Housing and Community Services for this opportunity to do innovative projects that will make a huge difference in the lives of our entire community.