



## Emergency Residence Project

### Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2017-2018

**Services:** The Emergency Residence Project offers a continuum of sheltering and housing programs. The first program is our emergency shelter, which provides short-term safe shelter, meals, referrals to community resources, and supportive services. The main goal of the program is to work with people experiencing homelessness on obtaining a better living situation than they had at entry. Shelter guests are given time to self-resolve their housing situation, and individualized housing supports are provided as needed. The Associate Director provides supportive services that may include but are not limited to: accessing necessary documentation such as photo identification, social security cards, and birth certificates, connections and referrals to community resources, employment assistance, and access to mental health counseling.

The second program is our Transitional Housing Program, which offers affordable housing options along with individualized housing support services for six families at a time. The main goal of the program is to work with the families on transitioning into permanent housing and to increase their ability to maintain housing. This program targets families with significant barriers to housing, where long-term supports and assistance may be required to ensure the family's success in maintaining permanent housing.

Our newest program is a Rapid Re-Housing Program that was awarded funding in January 2018. This program is designed to rapidly get people from shelter or uninhabitable living situations and into a rental unit of their own, while providing short-term rental assistance and individualized housing supportive services to increase their ability to maintain the permanent housing. This program is available in Greene, Boone, Story, Marshall, and Hardin Counties. This program targets households that have barriers to housing, most of which can be alleviated within a six-month timeframe. This program is just getting up and running and is currently providing housing and support services to five households.

Housing supportive services are provided regularly in both programs and are tailored to meet each household's specific needs. Supportive services may include but are not limited to: financial literacy, budgeting, parenting skills, landlord/tenant education, connections and referrals to community resources, employment assistance, access to mental health counseling, accessing credit reports, and assisting clients through other barriers as needed.

Our final program is our Homelessness Prevention Financial Assistance Program. In this program, we provide cash assistance to prevent evictions and pay overdue utility bills for households in Story County. We know it is much more cost effective and less traumatic for a household to remain in housing, so this program targets those at-risk of becoming homeless to increase their ability to remain housed.

#### **Statistics:**

##### Emergency Shelter:

- 732 people entered shelter; 521 unique clients were served
- 9,189 nights of shelter were provided with an average of 25 individuals being sheltered nightly
- Of the 732 people that entered, 326 exited into transitional or permanent housing
- 4,344 meals were provided to shelter guests, with the assistance of wonderful community volunteers.

##### Transitional Housing:

- 35 people entered the program; 22 were under 18 years of age; 8 households were served
- Average length of stay for people that left the program during the year was 281 days
- 23 people exited shelter, 21 of which transitioned to permanent housing (91.3%)
- 100% of adults served were connected with mainstream resources, obtained some level of employment or increased their education, and improved their financial situation.

Homelessness Prevention: Over \$154,000 was spent in Story County to help keep people housed and prevent them from entering into the homelessness system. The county breakdown is as follows:

<b>Community</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>Individuals</b>
Ames	332	821
Cambridge	6	26
Collins	7	16
Colo	9	30
Gilbert	8	28
Huxley	32	83
Kelley	4	5
Maxwell	10	33
McCallsburg	3	7
Nevada	99	217
Roland	8	26
Slater	7	19
Story City	29	76
Zearing	6	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>1404</b>

**Changes over the year:** We have undergone all kinds of changes and updates over the last year!

*Properties:* With the support of grants through United Way of Story County and Ames Morning Rotary, donations received from Christ Community Church, and work done by Ames Noon Rotary and Woodruff Construction, the backyard play area was renovated. We needed to install drainage tiles to minimize the collection of rain we were experiencing and decided to update the play area to better meet the needs of our guests and their children. Through another grant through the City of Ames and United Way of Story County, we were able to install central air conditioning in our Transitional Housing four-plex and the office area of the shelter. The cooler air was much appreciated after the extremely hot days in June.

*Programming:* With the closing of Crawford Hall Emergency Shelter in Boone last year, we saw a significant increase in single women and families needing emergency shelter from Boone County. Through a grant received from the Alma Pedretti Foundation, we were able to provide motel vouchers to households from Boone County, so they could stay in their home community instead of relocating. This was very beneficial for the households served so they could exit into housing more effectively.

We have transitioned our sheltering services to be more housing focused over this last year, as well as incorporating diversion services. Being a Housing Focused Shelter means that starting during the referral to shelter, staff are working with shelter guests on identifying housing goals and obtaining some level of housing. Diversion services ensure the few shelter openings we do have are being used by people that have utilized all other resources first and that our shelter is the last possible option. Through a grant received from United Way of Story County, we have some financial resources to assist people in being diverted from shelter. For example, if someone has family in another community, we now have funding to provide transportation to that community instead of forcing the individual to stay in shelter while working towards raising the funds needed.

Another significant change is the implementation of a regional Coordinated Entry System. Coordinated entry is a way to triage people experiencing homelessness to better meet their needs and ensure consistent information is being offered to people across programs. The Emergency Residence Project is taking the lead in the development of a Coordinated Entry system and is working in collaboration with YSS and ACCESS. Our region consists of Greene, Boone, Story, Marshall and Hardin counties and is called the Two Rivers region.

**Other:**

Our staff and interns, in collaboration with YSS, ACCESS, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau, worked hard to get ready for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Reggie's Sleepout Ames that was to be held at Jack Trice Stadium in March 2018. Unfortunately, due to severe winter weather that made the conditions unsafe for people to sleep-out, we had to cancel the event. Despite having to cancel the event, \$25,000 was raised for our transitional and rapid re-housing programs. A huge thank you to everyone that supported the event, especially Wells Fargo and McFarland Clinic for the sponsorships, and Erica Campbell, Deb Fennelly, and Katie Prohm for all your support as our Honorary Co-Chairs.

**Usage to Date:** Since August 1985, we have provided emergency Shelter for 174,506 nights of shelter. We provided transitional housing 905 people. We offered homelessness prevention assistance to 26,937 individuals.