

## Annual Report 2019-2020

It was an interesting year!

Fiscal year 2019-2020 started with wonderful circumstances – a new facility with three times the space, beds for more residential clients, more tables for community neighbors eating in the dining hall and more volunteers.

A lot of change, but it was all good!

**As our fiscal year ended on June 30, COVID had changed everything. See enclosed report.**

For the first time, we have space for parents with children. Families formerly were crowded into motel rooms without easy access to our meals, laundry, case management and rehousing services.

Families now are residing in a secure wing with seven family bedrooms enhanced by a living room, kitchenette, children's area and outdoor playground.

A second change involved our multiple food programs. All onsite residential clients and community neighbors needing meals now can eat in one shift in the new 120-person dining hall, making service easier and more efficient for volunteers and staff.

We now have a much-expanded pantry, allowing three times the space to store food donations for residents living on their own, but needing extra food to stretch their budget.

We expected the number of emergency shelter clients enrolled in our Rapid Rehousing program to increase dramatically due to tripling the bed space.

And it did – for a while. But many residential clients lost their jobs immediately with COVID and needed a safe place to live. As they seek new jobs, their lengths of stay at the Shelter have increased.



## Who Experiences Homelessness?

It may not be who you expect.

It's certainly not the film version that suggests a homeless person is a man seemingly without the motivation to improve his life.

There's nothing typical about homelessness; homelessness can impact men or women, young or old, working or nonworking. And it strikes many people unexpectedly.

Union County residents who are experiencing homelessness may have job loss, divorce, rent increase, illness, family dispute or something as minor as vehicle failure. These circumstances can quickly move residents from independence to temporary homelessness.

We are dedicated to being a low-barrier shelter, providing access and services to all populations. We address underlying homeless and hunger problems, guiding clients back to self-sufficiency and independent living quickly.

The quicker the return to stability, the less traumatic the episode of homelessness, especially for children.

We focus on three areas – emergency shelter, food and rehousing – and collaborate with other organizations with complementary programs.



## EMERGENCY SHELTER

We provide short-term shelter to Union County residents who have become homeless for varied reasons. Many emergency shelter clients are homeless due to the combination of low income and expensive housing costs.

We shelter up to 90 people nightly in separate family, female and men's dormitory wings.

Last year we provided **27,177 nights of emergency shelter** (18,435 the previous year) to **493 homeless individuals, including 34 families with 79 children.**

COVID directly increased the length of stays due to loss of jobs, no job availability and limited housing market for rehousing.

Over the last three years, **1,720 county residents** have received **63,408** nights of emergency shelter.



## FOOD

The Community Shelter operates multiple food programs, including prepared meals in the dining hall and food boxes for community neighbors and senior citizens needing food. We want to ensure that all residents experiencing hunger have food.

With food boxes, we are helping community residents remain at home. A monthly \$100 food box can make the difference for someone earning minimum wage or Social Security between paying the rent or being evicted.

Last year, we served **73,946 prepared meals** in our dining hall (54,547 the previous year) and provided **354,411 pounds of food** to residents living independently in our community.

Over the last three years, the Shelter has served **182,514 prepared meals** and distributed **597,423 pounds of food in food boxes**.



## REHOUSING

By encouraging rehousing, we can keep homelessness from becoming chronic for many county residents.

Last year, **104 households, including 82 single adults and 32 families with 73 children**, moved into

independent living by using our Rapid Rehousing program and receiving rent, utility and move-in subsidies as needed.

Of those, 68 households received furniture and home supplies through our Home Again program, which distributes gently-used furniture donated by the public.

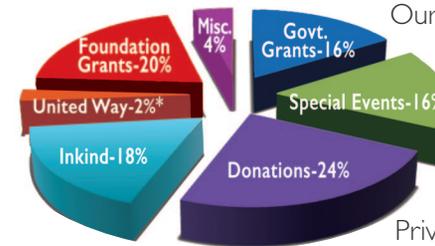
Our Rapid Rehousing program supports and guides the temporarily homeless while allowing them to resolve their own issues. Case managers help clients combine community resources to obtain and retain a job, improve job skills, address health issues, strengthen budgeting skills and obtain affordable housing.

Our staff coaches Shelter residents on a 60-day plan, then follows them for a year after they move out, which helps homelessness from recurring. Over three years, **306 households** have been rehoused and **89 percent** have continued in independent living.



## Where Our Funding Comes From

The Community Shelter depends heavily on contributions to operate its three program lines – emergency shelter, food and rehousing.



\* Revenue recognition timing, otherwise 6% share  
Unaudited figures

Our financial statements reflect **\$1,768,551 in operational revenue** last year. Of this, 24 percent came from direct financial contributions, 2 percent from United Way contributions and 16 percent from Community Shelter-organized events.

Private foundation support totaled 20 percent, and government grants were 16 percent. Other revenue and in-kind donations, such as food and facility services, totaled 22 percent.

We're grateful for every donation of every amount – we could not serve the hungry and homeless in Union County without your donations!

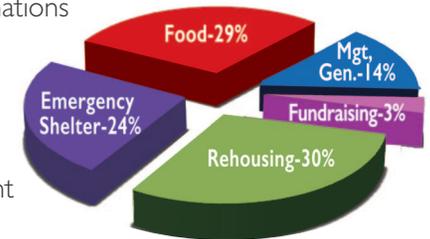
One area of tremendous support that does not show in a financial audit is volunteer support.

Last year, volunteers contributed 23,391.25 hours of service – or the equivalent of 11.25 full-time employees.

## How We Spend That Funding

We strive to be good stewards of the donations invested in our mission.

Last year, **operational expenses totaled \$1,756,384**. We spent 83 percent on direct program services, 3 percent on fundraising and 14 percent on management and general costs.



Rehousing is our largest program area, with 30 percent of our budget used to keep one-time or incidental homelessness from becoming chronic.

*The Union County Community Shelter, dba Community Shelter of Union County, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, Federal Tax ID# 58-2121860.*



... Providing food, shelter and a pathway to self-sufficiency to those experiencing hunger and homelessness in Union County.

For volunteer or donor opportunities, visit [UnionShelter.org/GetInvolved](http://UnionShelter.org/GetInvolved).  
160 Meadow St., Monroe, NC 28110 ♦ [www.UnionShelter.org](http://www.UnionShelter.org) ♦ 704.289.5300