



# Homes with Hope

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

## Homes with Hope and Project Return

The highlight of 2016 for Homes with Hope was our October merger with Project Return. This 30+ year old Westport agency has become a program under the HwH "roof" of services that we offer to the community. With few changes to the Project Return mission we are continuing to help young women in crisis and help them find their way back to an independent life.

Since the merger, ten young women aged 18-24 have occupied the house and they are benefiting greatly from the counseling and care they are receiving. To give you an idea of who our residents are, these are some of their stories:

• After her family was evicted from their home in September 2016, "Zara's" family dispersed, and the 20-year-old found herself without a home. For several months she moved from place to place staying on friends' couches. She was on the verge of dropping out of school and losing her car when she arrived at Project Return in November. The stability and support she received at Project Return made it possible for her to continue in her studies and to keep her job. The program also provided her with some financial support until she was able to get back on track with making her car payments. Zara recently returned to live with her family with her car payments up to date, her job intact, and her education uninterrupted.

• In September 2016, "Cicely" left an abusive situation and moved in with her sister and her sister's 3 children. Shortly thereafter Cicely experienced two crises: her father was killed in a car accident and her sister was evicted. Cicely was suddenly homeless and in mourning. At 22 years of age, Cicely came to Project Return with few resources and a 10th grade education. Within one month Cicely has enrolled in a six month High School Diploma program,



developed her resume, and learned job hunting skills. She has learned how to navigate public transportation, plan and prepare meals, and manage her medical needs. Cicely has recently learned that she has been accepted into a program in which she will be in her own apartment within the next month. Project Return will track her progress in this new environment to help her with her new challenges.

• "Rachel," her mother, her father, and younger brother had been evicted and were living in their car for several months. Rachel is 20 years old, in college, and is very close with her family. Rachel's school work quickly began to suffer and her family knew she needed a place to stay where she could focus on her school work but they did not want to have to be apart. Homes with Hope was able to provide a solution. Rachel

came to Project Return shortly after our new program opened. Shortly thereafter, her mother and brother went to Linxweiler House, one of Homes with Hope's shelters for mothers and children, and her father was given a bed at Gillespie Center. For this family, being able to stay close to one another during this very stressful period has been a blessing. Rachel has been able to stay focused on her academics while gaining independent living skills living and staying closely connected to her family. With the support of Homes with Hope, the family is able to see each other on a daily basis and is very close to securing a three bedroom apartment.

We are continuing to change the lives of young women, and empower them during their periods of crisis. The community has been very supportive of the merger, providing further evidence that we live in a caring, nurturing Town.

Homes with Hope's mission is to support the homeless and those at-risk of homelessness in the communities we serve by providing food, safe emergency shelter, permanent supportive housing, and the supportive services needed to achieve a more independent and self-sufficient life.

### LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome to our 2016 Annual Report!



We had a few milestones last year that were very exciting.

- The lead article speaks to the merger with Project Return. This combination of two venerable Westport Agencies provides great synergy in providing services to all. We now have a comprehensive approach to serving young women in crisis, and since late last year have been changing the lives of women aged 18-24. This merger is helping us be better at dealing with the 30 children in our programs prior to the merger, and in all ways we are a better organization. We are very grateful that the Board of Project Return chose to combine with us, and we are intent on continuing their mission.
- We made great progress in integrating the Coordinated Access Network of Fairfield County. We have participated in and led much of this activity over the last few years, and are proud of the role we have played in helping to END chronic homelessness in Fairfield County.

Unfortunately all of our programs remain full nearly every night of the year. Homelessness is better managed and more efficiently understood, but it still exists. We all look to the day when we can say it does not, and if all communities were as supportive of their local needs as is ours, the problem would be solved. Some Day!

Thank you as always for your support!

Jeff Wieser  
President & CEO

3/30/2017

## FOOD PANTRY



Sunovion Pharmaceuticals volunteers take a break at the Food Pantry

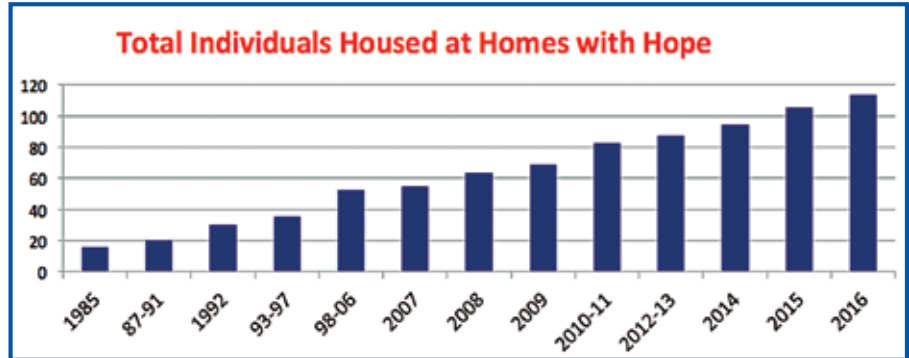
The Food Pantry is open to all who need groceries every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday from 1pm - 4pm. While donations are holding steady, demand continues to rise.

For further information call **203-226-1661**.

# Meeting the Challenges of Homelessness

Measuring performance and effectiveness is one of the great challenges of homelessness. Our case managers meet weekly to discuss each one of their clients – both as a group and in individual supervision. We KNOW we are doing as much as we can to help our clients get housing and stay housed. But the one metric we value above all is our ability to keep helping MORE people in the most urgent need. To that end we focus on the chart below: the number of individuals that we care for each night. This number has grown ever since we first started housing people in our emergency

shelter in 1984. As of last year, we now care for more than 110 people in beds every night. We also keep aware of many more through our Rapid Rehousing Program; our Community Kitchen and Food Pantry; our mentoring programs; and our outreach, which looks constantly for people who are not willing to come into the shelter. We plan to continue this trend – with the help of a very generous community!



## Homes with Hope Focuses on Educational Enrichment

When Homes with Hope began its Permanent Supportive Housing program in 1998, most of our residents were single men and women in their 30's and 40's. As the years have passed we find our programs filled with a few seniors and lots of children. Nearly 35 of our 115 beds every night are filled with school aged children. With that shift has come a responsibility to pay much closer attention to the needs of education. A number of our post-high school clients are currently attending Norwalk Community College, and we are encouraging anyone interested to take this and other "ladders out of poverty."

We help these ambitious clients attend classes in Norwalk through a grant from the Melville Charitable Trust which allows families the funding for transportation and tuition to either attend college classes or go to work.

Our combination with Project Return last year highlighted the need to prepare more opportunities for all the youth in our care to advance their education.

Our most ambitious effort to build on the educational opportunities available to our residents is our Youth Education Initiative (YEI). This program just began in March of 2017. It has been created as a result of watching a number of the youth living in the agency's Permanent Supportive Housing programs repeat the family's cycle of homelessness. Despite the extensive work done by our professional case management staff with the families and individuals served, we continue to see the negative effects that homelessness imprints on many of our programs' children. The Youth Education Initiative, led by Lynn Abramson, MA Ed, works with the young people in this program, elementary to high school students, to provide a consistent structure, positive role models, academic support and enrichment activities that will help them develop the skills and tools they need to be successful at school and in their personal lives.



Lynn Abramson and volunteer tutors guide children at our new after school program.

Lynn worked on recruitment of the students from our client population and promotion of the Program beginning with the Program Director and families' Case Manager meeting jointly with the parent to explain and encourage their commitment in the Program. We believe that the parent's "buy-in" is critical to the success of each student and each parent's input regarding their children's participation will help inform the ongoing improvement of the Program. In addition, each student's feedback will also be taken into consideration. The Program Director will also be meeting with each child's school social worker and guidance counselor to gain their collaboration and insights. The children's actual participation in the Program started in early March and will run during the school year and the summer months as needed.

We have high hopes for this program, and the enthusiasm that it has generated to date virtually guarantees its success!

# SAVE THE DATES

## TO BENEFIT PROJECT RETURN



Cocktails – Dinner – Dancing  
Saturday, June 3rd – 7:00pm  
Saugatuck Rowing Club, Westport



Cocktails – Tuesday evening, October 17th  
Luncheon – Wednesday, October 18th  
Shorehaven Club, Norwalk

## 10TH ANNUAL STAND UP FOR Homes with Hope



Saturday, November 4th – 8:00pm  
The Quick Center, Fairfield  
Comedian TBD

### HOMES WITH HOPE STAFF

**Jeffrey N. Wieser**  
President & CEO  
**Audrey Sparre, MA MFT**  
Vice President & COO  
Director of Supportive Housing Operations  
**Karen Mahar**  
Director of Resource Development  
**Jacqueline Hogan**  
Director of Finance & Comptroller  
**Maureen Liebergall**  
Community Relations Coordinator

### PROGRAM STAFF

**Paris Looney, MSW**  
Director of Emergency Shelter Services  
Program Director, Bacharach Community  
**Lynn Abramson, MA Ed**  
Program Director,  
Mentoring Program & Youth Initiative  
**Jennifer Lyn Amon**  
Program Director, HEAL  
**Shavonne Dash, LMSW**  
Case Manager, Gillespie Center & Hoskins Place  
**Chynna I. Edmond, LMSW**  
Case Manager, Fair Street & Hales Court  
**Wendy Epstein, LCSW**  
Case Manager, Westport Rotary  
Centennial House & Hayes Avenue  
**Tessa Gilmore-Barnes, BA**  
Program Director, Project Return  
**Tracy Graham**  
Supervisor, Bacharach Community  
**JoAnn Hughes, MSW**  
CTI Case Manager  
**Lakesha Jackson**  
Supervisor, Bacharach Community  
**Ray Kalinowski**  
Supervisor, Gillespie Center & Hoskins Place  
**Irene Lindsey**  
Supervisor, Project Return  
**Rob Lockhart, LMSW**  
Program Director, Gillespie Center & Hoskins Place  
**Kelly McLaughlin**  
Supervisor, Gillespie Center & Hoskins Place  
**Adrienne Numaworse**  
Supervisor, Project Return  
**Robynne Quinn, LCSW**  
Case Manager, Powell Place, Sasco Creek & CT RRP

## FINANCIALS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED 12/31/2016

Financial results for 2016 came in close to budget and were affected by two significant events: the October 13 merger with Project Return and the receipt of a \$100,000 grant from the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH). We consolidated the operations of Project Return from the merger date, and this will have a significant impact on our comparable numbers.

Total Revenue increased 8.7% to \$3.23 million. Combined revenues from Individuals, Foundations, Corporations and Religious Institutions grew 7.4% to \$1,195,101, while Government Revenue sources jumped 10.1% mainly due to the CSH grant.

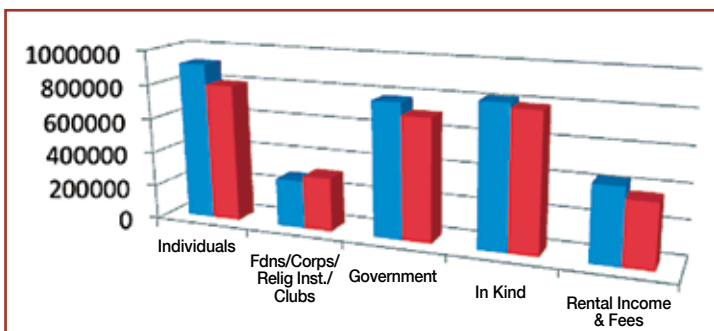
In Kind revenues increased 3.6% mostly due to an increase in volunteer activity from our very generous community, and to our expanded understanding of how to account for that generous outreach.

As a result of the addition of Project Return in the last quarter of the year and staffing at Linxweiler House, Total Expenses were up 5.9%.

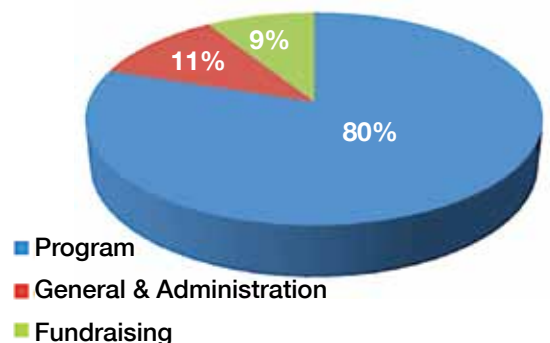
It is significant that these increases were all program related and largely due to the increased staffing requirements of a growing organization. The integration of Project Return added unusual expenses to our annual results, but the combination has been as smooth as such “corporate mergers” can be. With the added activities of Project Return, Program Expense as a percent of our Total Expenses rose to 80.0% from last year’s 74.2%. This important metric shows the value of our fundraising effectiveness. We remain committed to becoming an even more efficient organization. Fundraising costs decreased to 9.0% from 10.5% in 2015, while General & Administrative Expenses dropped to 11.0% from 15.3% in 2015.

Our combined results, including the operations of Project Return from the merger date, showed a small gain, very appropriate for our 501c(3), of \$18,552. This excellent result included \$170,929 of non-cash depreciation. With that performance, along with merger-related contributions, our cash position increased to provide for the continuing requirements of the merger, as well as the uncertainties of a possibly transitioning government response to our activities. ON TO 2017!

### REVENUE SOURCES



### EXPENDITURES



For a copy of our audited statements or Form 990, please call the office, or visit our website, [www.hwhct.org](http://www.hwhct.org).





Homes *with* Hope

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203-226-3426 • [www.hwhct.org](http://www.hwhct.org)

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Westport, CT  
Zip Code 06880  
Permit No. 320

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Officers:**

John Walsh, *Chair*  
Lauren Soloff, *Vice Chair*  
Rachel Meisel, *Secretary*  
Bruce Hennemuth, *Treasurer*

**Directors:**

Brian Baxendale  
Janis Collins  
Cheryl Eldh  
Jennifer Ferrante  
Bruce Gaylord  
Chris Greer  
Jeff Gurren  
Heidi Kurlander-Kail  
Kimberly Lake  
Catherine Lewis  
Jim Randel  
Angel Reyes  
Stephen Rowland  
Jeff Scanlan  
Patrice Schramm  
Hal Shupack  
Chan Wheeler  
Missy Zahler

Graphic Design: Tammy Hines Design

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## EMERGENCY SHELTERS



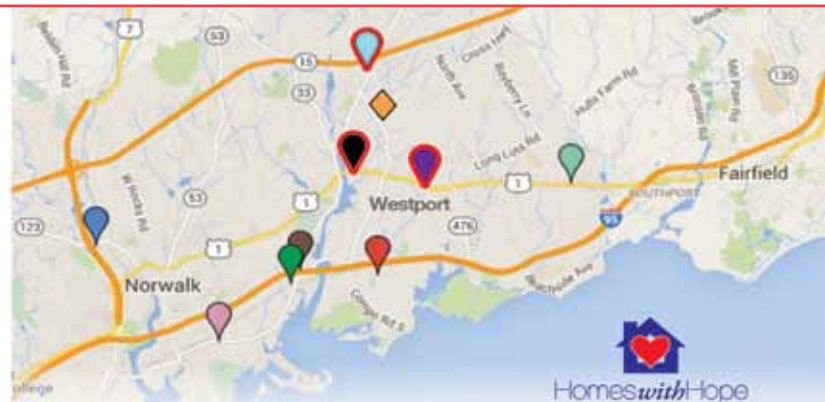
**Gillespie Center & Hoskins Place**  
Gillespie Center opened April 1989 and Hoskins Place opened late 1993. Shelter for single men and women in Westport.



**Bacharach Community**  
Opened September 1993. Shelter for single mothers and their children in Westport.



**Linxweiler House**  
Opened 2009. Extension of the Bacharach Community in Westport.



## SUPPORTIVE HOUSING



**Powell Place**  
Opened November 1998. Nine units serving individuals and families in Westport.



**Rotary Centennial House**  
Opened September 2009. Six units serving individuals and families in Westport.



**Fair Street Apartments**  
Opened fall 2010. Eight units serving individuals in Norwalk.



**Hales Court**  
Opened November 2011. Ten units serving individuals and families in Westport.



**Hayes Avenue**  
Opened mid 2014. Two units serving individuals and families in Norwalk.



**Sasco Creek Village**  
Opened July 2015. Six units serving individuals and families in Westport.

## PROJECT RETURN



Opened 1986. Joined Homes with Hope October 2016. Serving young women in crisis.

Visit our website: [www.hwhct.org](http://www.hwhct.org)