



**MASSACHUSETTS HOUSING
AND SHELTER ALLIANCE**

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THE NORTH STAR

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Initiating Solutions to Homelessness

Summer 2011

8TH ANNUAL HOME FOR GOOD EVENT A SUCCESS

More than 250 MHSA members, friends and supporters gathered in the Grand Ballroom of the Boston Marriott Copley Place on May 18 for the eighth annual Home for Good: Solutions Start Here event.

MHSA honored John Rosenthal of Meredith Management and Friends of Boston's Homeless, Worcester Mayor Joe O'Brien and Home Again in Worcester for their work to initiate solutions to homelessness.

"I am humbled by the commitment shown by this outstanding group of honorees," said MHSA President and Executive Director Joe Finn. "It was an honor to congratulate our awardees and celebrate strides made in ending homelessness in the Commonwealth."

Guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, cocktails and entertainment by a jazz trio. A photo gallery of newly housed individuals, along with snapshots of their homes, reminded guests that solutions to homelessness start at MHSA.

The awards presentation was kicked off with a solutions-themed video, with interviews of board members, executive directors of member agencies, funders and elected officials. It encouraged viewers to support MHSA in its mission to end homelessness.

John Rosenthal received the **Bob Ray Partnership Award** for his more than 20 years of service in the effort to end homelessness. Under his leadership and in conjunction



Worcester Mayor Joe O'Brien, Friends of Boston's Homeless Founder John Rosenthal, MHSA Executive Director Joe Finn, Community Healthlink Executive Director Deborah Ekstrom, The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts CEO Dr. Jan Yost and SMOC Executive Director Jim Cuddy.

with the city of Boston, Friends of Boston's Homeless has raised more than \$25 million and developed a full spectrum of emergency shelter, transitional housing, job training, employment services and permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness. Bob Ray's widow Sandra, daughter Jennifer and her husband Tim Kannally were on hand to congratulate John.

Home Again in Worcester was honored with the **MHSA Cornerstone Award**. Led by Community Healthlink and including the South Middlesex Opportunity Council/ People in Peril Shelter, the Henry Lee Willis Center, Dismas House, Jeremiah's Inn and the Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance, Home Again worked with The Health

Foundation of Central Massachusetts to play a pivotal role in creating permanent solutions to chronic homelessness in Worcester.

Mayor Joe O'Brien accepted the **Canon Brian S. Kelley Public Servant Award** on behalf of the city of Worcester. Mayor O'Brien led regional efforts to oppose Question 2 last fall and has been a passionate advocate for affordable housing and ending homelessness in Worcester. Past award recipients include Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino and City Councilor Mike Ross.

MHSA is grateful to our member agencies, event sponsors, presenters and donors. MHSA would especially like to thank our honorees for their leadership in creating permanent solutions to homelessness.

GOOD NEWS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS IN MASS.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded MHSA a McKinney grant to create Home Front, a permanent supportive housing program for 15 chronically homeless veterans. Participants will live in units throughout greater Boston and operated by Caritas Communities. To help participants maintain housing and achieve personal goals, MHSA is partnering with the New England Center for Homeless Veterans (NECHV), to provide outreach, referrals and case management services. Flexible support will be provided through one case manager from NECHV and a resident manager at each property.

Home Front is one of 691 new projects nationwide, funded by HUD, which provide housing and supportive services to homeless individuals and families. MHSA received funding through the Boston



Continuum of Care's (CoC) 2010 McKinney application to operate Home Front for two years, and can reapply for funding in subsequent years.

The Boston CoC was funded for a second program included with this application that several MHSA member agencies will be involved with. The **Chronically Homeless Housing Program** is Boston's first McKinney-funded initiative that houses both individuals and families who are chronically homeless.

Pine Street Inn will lease 18 units throughout Boston and will partner with the Boston Public Health Commission, hopeFound, St. Francis House and Travelers Aid Family Services to provide support, including extensive housing stabilization services.

We at MHSA are looking forward to these new partnerships and the impact they will have on ending homelessness in Massachusetts.

ABOUT MHSA

MHSA is a nonprofit public policy advocacy alliance with the mission to end homelessness in Massachusetts through permanent housing solutions.

MHSA forms strategic partnerships with government, private philanthropy, business leaders and service providers to ensure homelessness does not become a permanent part of the social landscape.

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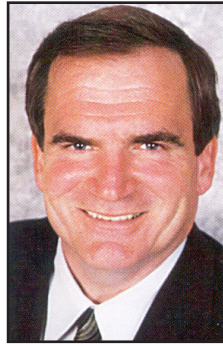
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It's that time of year. Charitable walks, runs and bike rides dedicated to worthy causes, and the inspiring people who contribute their time and resources to them, fill the Esplanade nearly every weekend. It's easy to get swept up in the excitement of it all.

Yet as I pass these events and turn onto the streets of Boston, I see homeless individuals sleeping on grates. I think of the mentally ill people in jail instead of mental health facilities. I hear of another person who can't get substance abuse treatment because resources are not available. And I wonder: can the system be fixed with a walk, run or bike ride?

The good news is this: we know what the cure to homelessness is, we don't have to walk for it. We already have the models that will create a more humane, efficient and cost-effective system of care for homeless individuals.

Ours is not the easiest cause to market. Homelessness is a cheerless reality. It's mental illness and substance abuse. It's tattered clothes,



President & Executive Director Joe Finn

weathered faces and dirty hands asking for spare change. It's easy to ignore the problem or simply think that it doesn't pertain to us.

That's why it was so uplifting to see hundreds of MHSA champions gather together at the Boston Marriott last month for Home for Good: Solutions Start Here. Assembling so many people, all of whom share the same vision as MHSA, gives me hope. The increasing number of donors who make multiple contributions to our

efforts makes me optimistic. The emergent role faith communities are playing in creating real and effective change encourages me.

With strategic direction and the proper resources, shared so generously time and again by faithful MHSA partners, we can not only advocate for permanent change, but create it

Thank you for taking the time to read the updates in this newsletter and I hope you recognize the tremendous difference your support makes.

All of us at MHSA certainly do.

SOCIAL ACTION MINISTRIES NAME CHANGE

In 1976, religious communities in Boston formed Social Action Ministries (SAM) in response to increasing numbers of homeless individuals on the doorsteps of their congregations. From the beginning, SAM's mission was to end homelessness through education, advocacy and collaboration. A MHSA program since 1997, SAM is now taking a step forward in affirming its commitment to social action across boundaries of faith, belief and practice by transitioning from "Social Action Ministries" to "Social Action Massachusetts."

As SAM changes its name, its commitment to ending homelessness remains the same, as does its emphasis on encouraging lively dialogue about the relationship between belief and action in conjunction with advocacy. The name "Social Action Massachusetts" highlights



SAM's expansion to include communities from across the Commonwealth. The name change also reflects SAM's conviction that people of diverse religious, spiritual or ethically-based backgrounds—many of whom may not identify with the word "ministries"—recognize the dignity of all human beings by working for a society in which no one is without a home.

Whether you draw your

beliefs and practices from traditional religious sources, humanistic values or other spiritual or ethical ideas or communities, SAM invites you to take part in our dialogue on social action—and to support permanent solutions to homelessness.

For information or to get involved with Social Action Massachusetts, contact Caitlin Golden at cgolden@mhsa.net or 617-367-6447 extension 28.

INVESTING IN SOLUTIONS

Today there is an unprecedented consensus on our shared capacity to end homelessness. State and local governments are taking an interagency approach to the problem, plans to end homelessness are being enacted, and corporate and community partners are joining forces to create systemic change. MHSA plays a pivotal role in the action that is producing visible outcomes in Massachusetts. But we can't do it alone!

Please use the enclosed envelope to send a tax-deductible contribution to MHSA today. Thank you for your support!

PHOTOS FROM 2011 HOME FOR GOOD: SOLUTIONS START HERE



Stacey Lucchino, John Jordan and Julie Jordan of Live Nation attended in support of John Rosenthal and his work to end homelessness.



Citizens Bank President Jerry Sargent and Director of Public Affairs Noreen McMahon were on hand to celebrate.



MHSA Board Member Wilton Hyman of New England Law Boston and his wife Amanda.



Bob Pulster of DHCD with Jim Greene, Director of the City of Boston Emergency Shelter Commission.



Boston Public Health Commission Director Dr. Barbara Ferrer with Hearth Board Chair Bob Wadsworth.



Roberto Flores, Will Cifredo and Tonya Dalhaus from Heading Home enjoyed the evening.

UPCOMING YPG SOCIAL EVENT JULY 19

Network with young professionals, enjoy a dueling piano show and support efforts to end homelessness in Massachusetts at the MHSA Young Professionals Group (YPG) annual summer social event.

Join us Tuesday, July 19, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Howl at the Moon, 184 High Street, Boston.

Tickets are \$25 each and just \$20 per person

for groups of five or more. Purchase online at www.mhsa.net today!

There are also sponsorship opportunities available for companies and organizations which include event tickets and recognition on event materials.

For more information please contact Caitlin Golden at cgolden@mhsa.net or 617-367-6447 ext. 28.

We hope to see you there!



YPG members at a recent event.

HELLO & GOODBYE! PROGRAM ASSISTANT HIRED

Louisa Lauher joined MHSA in June as the new program assistant, providing support for the administration of contracts, subcontracts, and leases to help ensure program effectiveness and compliance. After relocating to Boston in 2010, Louisa worked in the proofreading department of a publishing company before pursuing her passion for nonprofit work at MHSA. Louisa graduated from Bryn Mawr College and has demonstrated both an academic and personal interest in underserved constituencies, specifically the LGBTQ community. She and her partner live in Dorchester.



NEWEST MEMBER AGENCIES

MHSA welcomes new member agencies Back on My Feet Boston, Youth on Fire in Cambridge, Worcester Homeless Action Committee and RCAP Solutions in Gardner. We look forward to working together to end homelessness.

PATRICK WALSH RETIRES

After six years as liaison to state and member agencies, MHSA Policy and Advocacy Director Patrick Walsh has retired.

Before MHSA, Pat spent 32 years at the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), serving as director of homeless services for 12 of those years.

Pat's breadth of knowledge and experience were invaluable to MHSA. Although someone new will eventually sit down at his desk, Pat will never truly be replaced. We wish Pat well in the next phase of his life.