SUCCESS STORY: MARIA

Maria experienced her first episode of homelessness after ten years of marriage ended abruptly. After the separation, Maria and her three children were left without a home or financial resources. Due to a lack of family or other social support in California, Maria and her kids moved to Colorado to try and find a job and stability. Unfortunately, she was not able to find employment out there either and was left with no option but to return to California and sleep in her car with her 2 young boys. She had chosen to send her teenage daughter with family in Mexico, hoping that she would be able to stay there until Maria could find suitable housing. They slept in the parking lot of a Target until they were accepted into the HomeAid Family CareCenter that Mercy House operates.

Maria and her boys initially had a difficult time adjusting as they had never stayed in a shelter before. But nevertheless, Maria was determined to leave the program housed so she did everything that was asked of her. She met with her navigator a couple times a week and gained employment fairly quickly. The biggest challenge for Maria was finding a unit large enough for her daughter to move back and after a number of unsuccessful attempts Maria was finally able to locate a home that would accommodate all of her children. Her Housing Navigator shared that Maria “became frustrated many times and almost gave up, but was able to push through”. Maria’s Navigator also helped Maria pick out items for her new home at the same target where she used to sleep in her car. Picking out pillows and bath towels and household items was an emotional experience for Maria, and she shared that she has so much gratitude to Mercy House for giving her this second chance. Maria’s daughter is now planning on moving back to California so that the family can once again be reunited in their new home.
FROM OUR FOUNDER:

This last year at Mercy House we have continued with our consistent growth and we are so thankful to all of our donors, volunteers, and supporters who have made this growth possible. We have served more people than we ever have before and have heard stories of hope and resolve from the men, women, and children who call Mercy House home.

It was our goal to house 1,500 individuals and we are proud to say that we blew past that goal, ending or preventing the homelessness of 1,707 men, women, and children.

Our mission has and continues to be simple: end homelessness. We operate 15 individual programs across 23 different locations in 2 different states spanning 5 counties. Our geographic expansion is a testament to the hard work and dedication that our staff exemplifies everyday. Last year, we opened 3 new year-round emergency shelters and continued our development on a number of permanent housing locations. With each new opportunity we have continued to place an emphasis on human dignity and providing a level of care that is consistent with those values.

As always, whatever services we provide we remember that at the center of those services needs to be a focus on housing. Last year we maintained or exited 98% of individuals served through our Permanent Supportive Housing Program maintained or exited to other permanent housing this year.

Lastly, we would like to again express our gratitude for the support that you have given us. Without your support we would not be able to continue providing these much needed services to the most vulnerable in our communities. We ask that if our mission and values still resonate with you, that you consider helping us on our mission to end homelessness.

With sincere gratitude,

Father Jerome T. Karcher
Founder and Board Chair

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

$11.2 M 2018-2019 operating budget
+$1.7 increase in operating budget from last year
93% of funds went directly to programs
$350,363 value received in donated in-kind goods
1,879 volunteers donated 13,478 hours of service to a value of $430,859

QUALITY OF LIFE

75% reported improvement in the quality of their sleep since being housed compared to when homeless.
77% reported improvement in the quality of their food since being housed compared to when homeless.
73% reported improvement in their outlook on life since being housed.
77% reported improvement in their sense of safety since being housed.

HOUSING RETENTION RATES

98% of individuals served through our Homeless Prevention Program over the past two years have maintained housing and have not entered homelessness.
95% of individuals who exited our Rapid Rehousing Programs into permanent housing over the past two years have not reentered homelessness.
91% of individuals served through our Permanent Supportive Housing Program maintained or exited to other permanent housing this year.
92% of individuals served through our Interim Housing Programs into permanent housing over the past two years have not reentered homelessness.

LOOKING AHEAD

TINY TIM
Tiny Tim, the other permanent housing site opening, will be a similar project with a few key differences. Tiny Tim will offer 51 two, three, and four bedroom units serving low-income families. Mercy House will provide onsite supportive services to ensure that these families thrive in and retain their housing. Additionally, Mercy House will organize social, recreational, and enrichment activities to create a strong sense of community at this location. A new amenity that will be offered onsite will be a fitness program operated by the Santa Ana Endurance Academy. This program will encourage health and fitness in an inclusive way that will benefit all ages and abilities. These two sites will add to Mercy House’s increasingly large housing portfolio and are just some of our projects in development.

THE AQUA
At Mercy House we have been so fortunate to see consistent growth in all of our programs, but none of this growth has provided as much impact as our Permanent Housing Program. In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, we will have the opportunity to open two new housing projects with our partners, Community Development Partners. The first will be a 57 unit site called The Aqua that will provide permanent supportive housing that will serve chronically homeless individuals, including those with severe mental illness. This location will provide onsite case management services, a gym, lounge, computer and community rooms, as well as a number of welcoming gathering spaces.