



HATAS

Homeless and Travelers Aid Society

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Homeless and Travelers Aid Society of the Capital District, Inc.

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COMPASSION, COLLABORATION, COMMUNITY

We reduce homelessness through compassionate programming that treats all persons with dignity and respect. We combat homelessness by collaborating with governmental funders, partner non-profit agencies, our donor base, our neighbors in need, and affected stakeholders. We prevent homelessness by partnering with community housing providers to reduce evictions, code violations, and other conditions which cause homelessness. Our mission is to prevent, reduce, and combat homelessness within the New York Capital Region.

Financial Highlights

HATAS is committed to strategic growth. Over the past five years, agency revenues have grown from \$1,944,785 to \$3,965,222. Our finance team is managed by a full-time Finance Director, the Executive Director, and the Board Finance and Audit committee. Annual audits are performed by Marvin & Company, P.C. More information can be found on our website at www.hatas.org.

COVID 19 Impact

Our annual report would be hard to construct without starting with a note about COVID 19. HATAS was classified as an essential provider of services from the beginning and all of our programs continued to operate during this time. While some of our employees were able to work remotely, others needed to perform their work at the job site. While it has been a stressful time for all of us, including those whom we serve, we have come through this more resilient and ready to embrace new challenges. Thank you for your prayers, your support, and your dedicated commitment to those whom we serve.

Operating Highlights

Highlights this past year include:

- Our **Capital Region Furniture Bank** furnished 585 low-income apartments last year. This is a **15% increase** over 2020. The Furniture Bank team picks up gently used furniture and then delivers it to low-income households in need. Without basic furnishings, formerly homeless and low-income households are often sleeping, eating, and living on the floor of their apartment. This level of “furniture poverty” negatively impacts

employment, education, health, and overall stability. In addition to eradicating furniture poverty, the Furniture Bank is a workforce development employment center for the homeless, the formerly incarcerated, and other low-income adults in need. Since inception we have trained over 30 adults in warehouse operations. Many have gone on to secure living-wage employment within the private and nonprofit sector. The Furniture Bank is an excellent example of not-for-profit collaboration. Over the past five years we have developed a network of partners including; CDPHP, Catholic Charities, St. Catherine's Center for Children, Soldier On, Northern Rivers, the Albany Housing Authority, Unity House, Rehabilitation Support Services, the Alliance for Better Health, and the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants. By operating this "shared service" each of our non-profit partners solve an important program (furniture poverty) without having to duplicate the effort behind storing, cleaning, and transporting furniture. Partners pay a fee and in exchange, can refer their clients/consumers to the Furniture Bank to shop for needed items. Finally, we care deeply about our environmental footprint. By giving our community a productive way to re-purpose their gently used furnishings we divert TONS of furniture from area landfills. You can contact the furniture bank at fb@hatas.org or by calling 518.612.BANK.

- The **Feed and Read (FaR) Program** reduces childhood hunger while increasing attendance, appropriate behavior, academic performance and parent-school involvement through the weekly provision of shelf stable food and an age-appropriate book. Students also receive a loaf of bread, fresh fruit, and a Stewart's gift card that can be redeemed for one gallon of milk & a dozen eggs. When possible NY Apple Sales provides the program with fresh "grade A" apples at no charge. Also, thanks to a very generous donation from CDPHP, students receive a milk and egg card **weekly** as opposed to bi-weekly. Feed and Read is currently the only backpack food program of its size including a book with every food delivery. By the end of every school year, each child has 30+ books of their own to keep and share. Providing books to every student is achieved through our partnership with Grassroot Givers. Volunteerism was impacted by the pandemic however with COVID protocols in place we continue to see a robust group of volunteers willing to pack food for low-income students. Our packing teams included staff from Albany Medical Center, CDPHP, Pioneer Bank, Cap Com, M&T Bank, MVP, Pioneer Bank, KeyBank, Leadership Tech Valley, Saint Pius X Church, and numerous family groups. If you are interested in volunteering with the Feed and Read Program please contact Nancy Kelly at nkelly@hatas.org.

- Last year the HATAS **Housing Program** served over 140 formally homeless households. The Housing team once again faced a challenging year juggling the safety of our staff and consumers, while continuing to provide the essential services our consumers need. Finding creative ways to continue to engage with the mentally ill population this team serves was vital and being able to open our 138 Central Ave office to housing program consumers was instrumental to that success. The Housing program has three primary goals: housing stability, increasing skills and income, and greater self-determination. The majority of those served by this program have a serious and persistent mental illness and many suffer from a co-occurring disorder. As part of our housing program, we are a member of the Albany County Coalition on Homelessness (ACCH).
- In addition to our traditional Housing program, we operate three Rapid Re-Housing programs.
 - The **Next Step** Rapid Re-Housing Program is for formerly incarcerated adults. Our work in helping formerly incarcerated adults find stability through housing, employment, and social development was highlighted at the National Alliance to End Homelessness Conference July of 2019.
 - **STEHP** (Solutions to End Homelessness Program) is a Rapid Re-Housing program funded by the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). STEHP which has operated since 2014, was awarded an additional \$155,000 last year. The increase allowed us to double the number of homeless single adults served. 100% of program participants live with a disabling condition, and many are classified as chronically homeless.
 - The **ESG CV RRH** (Emergency Solutions Grants Program (ESG) under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act) Program was a new RRH program to HATAS and provides complete rental assistance to households through September 30th, 2022. Since implementation of this program began in January of 2021, we have moved 39 households out of the shelter system and into affordable housing.
- The Community Transition Team (CTT), stationed at the Capital District Psychiatric Center, helps people living with serious mental illness secure housing, navigate the public benefits system, and coordinate treatment. Last year the CTT group assisted 98 mentally ill individuals. Additionally, the HATAS Housing Specialist stationed at the Albany County Department of Mental Health (ACDMH), works collaboratively with Care

Management teams at the County to help consumers find, secure, and maintain housing within the community.

- The Coordinated Entry (CE) program ensures that people experiencing homelessness find stable housing by identifying, evaluating, and then connecting them to housing. A standardized triage tool ranks applications based on need and then matches the person in need with the agency operating the rental unit. CE is designed to match households with the highest vulnerability with a limited pool of housing units and assistance. Last year CE served 799 individuals, a 39% increase over the prior year. The number of chronically homeless persons served increased by 70% in 2021.
- Our Emergency Services Program is proud to operate the after-hours homeless hotline. Since 1983 HATAS has been the go-to contact for homeless single adults and families in need of a safe & warm place to stay. Last year the hotline served 7,865 unique callers, a **40% increase** over 2020. Our homeless hotline is operational from 4 pm to 8 am, on holidays, and on weekends.
- The Code Blue Program ensures that homeless persons have a safe place when the temperature dips below 32 degrees. We call Code Blue alerts, coordinate placements, and serve as a liaison between area shelters and the homeless community.

Governance

HATAS is governed by a diverse Board of Directors and a professional staff. We pride ourselves on fiscal accountability, servant leadership, transparency and a holistic approach to program management.

Board Members: Geoff Cannon (President), Adam Cooper (Vice President), Rebecca Franklin (Treasurer), Tawana Davis (Secretary), Cathy Sliwinski (Member at Large), Tyler Bellick, Nichole Eisenzopf, Chris Betts, Courtney Buckley, Mike Durand, Maryse Folmsbee, Emily Light, Joe Volpe.

Senior Staff: Maria Grillo (Deputy Director), Brian Shea (Finance Director), Rachel Alexander (Director of Housing), Doug Vine (Mental Health Director), Christine Smith (Furniture Bank Manager), and Nancy Kelly (Development Coordinator).

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capital region furniture bank

