

About Open Arms Housing

OAH's first building, The Dunbar, is home to 16 formerly homeless women with histories of mental health issues, trauma, chronic poverty, and unstable relationships. Our doors opened welcoming new residents in 2009. In 2015, OAH opened Owen House in the Trinidad neighbor of DC, which houses four additional women. In both locations, OAH provides women safe, secure, private spaces in which to live.

OAH operates under a Housing First approach which holds that all individuals are entitled to safe and decent housing and that their access to this housing should not be contingent upon their participation in services. Those services can come later, but HOUSING IS FIRST.



Residents participate in an on-site Voter Registration Drive—



Special thanks to the Open Arms Housing Board of Directors for their commitment and financial support

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OAH Team

- Marilyn Kresky-Wolff, **Executive Director**
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- Linda Miller, **Interim Clinical Director**
- Belinda Knight, **Development Coordinator**
- Bridget McLaughlin, **Program Manager**
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TRANSFORMING BUILDINGS.
TRANSFORMING LIVES.



Annual Report to the Community 2015-2016



Janet Starke waves to a passing neighbor outside of her new home Trinidad. With support from Open Arms Housing, women like Janet, who were previously homeless, have moved into permanent homes with a welcoming and supportive environment. (Kate Patterson/For The Washington Post)

Open Arms Housing (OAH) provides permanent supportive housing for women in Washington, DC. who have a wide range of mental and physical challenges and who have lived for prolonged periods on the streets and in shelters. OAH offers onsite individualized services in a welcoming environment, using a "Housing First" approach which holds that all individuals are entitled to safe and decent housing and that access to housing should not be contingent upon participation in services.

OAH's goal is to be a leader for the eradication of long-term homelessness for women in Washington, DC. Our objectives are to explore new opportunities to house women who have experienced long-term homelessness, promote greater public and private investment in permanent supportive housing, educate policymakers and decision-makers about the positive impact of permanent supportive housing, and collaborate with public sector leaders and homeless advocates to promote increases in funding for

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Highlights

- * During the 2014 DHCD process, we partnered with developer Four Points LLC to provide supportive services for four women in a building under construction in Anacostia. The project was approved and is in the zoning process. All 38 units will be affordable housing.
- * We developed another partnership through the 2015 unified RFP of the DHCD with the Ainger Place Project in Congress Heights, towards a set-aside of eight units for OAH clients in a building to be constructed across the street from the church. This project will open in 2017, and would bring our unit total to 32.
- * The OAH Board and Executive Director decided to seek out and develop a scattered-site project, which would more quickly expand the number of units in which we can place our vulnerable homeless population and improve the likelihood that we can effect substantive reductions in the hundreds of women in the city who fit that description.
- * We are partnering to learn about Medicaid reimbursement of services in permanent supportive housing.
- * Awarded a \$50,000 in-kind Compass Foundation Micro Grant to develop long-term organizational stability, viability and capacity.
- * Added a Clinical Director position to our staff

Impact

- * Continued to maintain a 95% housing stabilization rate at the Dunbar and Owen House to keep 20 women safely housed
- * Saved residents from a collective 116 years of homelessness
- * 85% of residents were satisfied with all aspects of OAH.
- * 100% of residents engaged in relationship with support staff.
- * 95% of residents participants in program activities.
- * 70% of residents participate in mental health and/or substance abuse treatment.
- * 95% of residents apply for all financial benefits for which client is eligible.
- * 95% of residents contribute cash toward their rent.
- * 10% of residents have paid employment.
- * Increased Residential Stability/Housing Stability: 95% of residents meet all of their lease terms. 90% of residents follow program rules.
- * 100% receive daily supportive services and 95% participate in

Donors and Supporters

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DC Housing Authority
DC Dept. of Housing and Community Development
DC Dept. of Behavioral Health
US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
Home Builders Care Foundation
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The Catalogue for Philanthropy
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for the Prevention of Homelessness
Ainger Place Project
United Way of the Nation Capital Area

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