

## New Program Rehouses & Re-energizes



Artist Charles Jones at work in the new apartment he got through St. Elizabeth's Community Reinvestment Program.

**T**ough times demand bold and imaginative responses. With more and more people losing their jobs, housing, savings and joining the ranks of the homeless, restoring stability by getting them quickly rehoused is a priority.

Without a home, a permanent address, a phone or means of contacting or being contacted by potential employers, it's hard to escape this downward spiral. To counter this, St. Elizabeth developed a new Community Reinvestment Program and received a \$175,000 grant from Value Options this summer to rapidly rehouse homeless individuals with behavioral health issues. Now, a few months later, 27 formerly homeless individuals are living on their own in apartments throughout Santa Fe.

"Our new program uses the

Critical Time Intervention intensive case management model developed at Columbia University to quickly move people into housing and connect them to available community resources," says Shane Lampman, program manager. "This allows them to focus their energy on recovery and restoring their independence. Though the model's only been used a short time, studies already show its efficacy and impressive results."

Charles Jones is a case in point. After many years living in New England, working and pursuing his artwork while battling depression along with substance and alcohol abuse, he lost his job at a restaurant and the gallery exhibiting his artwork closed.

"It seems that whenever I had time on my hands, I got into trouble because all my acquaintances were drinking buddies," he says. "So my sister told me

that I needed a change in environment to focus on my art. She said Santa Fe was a good community for artists and bought me a train ticket to come here."

Charles got off the train at Lamy with only a duffel bag filled with his clothes and artwork and a few hundred dollars. After a few weeks at a local motel, his money ran out and he came to St. Elizabeth. Since he was seeking permanent housing, case managers at the shelter referred him to the Community Reinvestment Program.

To be accepted into the program, individuals must be homeless or in critical need of housing, have a clinically diagnosed behavioral health disorder, be in treatment for this issue and have some source of income (work, Social Security, benefits, etc.). Participants pay 30 percent of their income as rent with funds from the program paying the rest, along with all needed security and utility deposits. The program is partnering with local landlords and apartment complexes to guarantee payments in exchange for

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Building Futures...Changing Lives

~Mission~

To help the homeless lead more productive, stable and satisfying lives.

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# Director's Corner

## New Shelter for Women & Families

For the first time in 13 years, St. Elizabeth will not be operating the Winter Overflow Shelter. That program was placed in the hands of the Interfaith Community Shelter Group, with whom

we partnered last year, after the Santa Fe City Council designated its \$50,000 winter overflow appropriation to them. We wish them well in this vital task.

Instead, St. Elizabeth has inaugurated a new initiative, the Casa Familia Urgent Transition Program, to provide immediate housing and food, along with intensive case management, to homeless women with or without children and intact families with children throughout the winter months. Our goal is to immediately stabilize them, address any medical or behavioral health issues, provide needed services and referrals, and then move them into permanent housing as quickly as possible.

The need is pressing for such a service. In just the past few months, the Santa Fe Public Schools Adelante program has already identified more than 850 homeless children who are living with their parents in cars, couch-surfing with neighbors or doubling up with other families. In these situations, school attendance suffers and academic performance declines, while social skills and personal development are delayed.



Casa Familia

Thanks to a founding grant from The Frost Foundation, we can begin to address these issues. Housed in a large building conveniently located off Cerrillos Road, Casa Familia features a shared space for single women, individual rooms for families, a common kitchen and dining area, and on-site staff. To better accommodate schoolchildren and mothers, it opens at 3:30 pm so there is a place to go home to immediately after school and ample time to do homework before dinner and bedtime. St. Elizabeth is partnering with Adelante and Youth Shelters & Family Services to provide case management.

As with all our programs, volunteers and contributions are needed. If you would like to participate or help, call me at 982-6611 x 107 or designate Casa Familia on your check. By working together, we can create new opportunities and improve the lives of our community's at-risk women, children and families.

Deborah Tang,  
Executive Director



## Suds and Seeds for Siringo Seniors



Joana Armann and Mike Morelos proudly display a “monster” zucchini grown in the Abundant Harvest Garden.

Imagine trying to get your bags of dirty laundry to and from a laundromat when you don’t have a car, it’s a cold winter evening and the buses don’t run regularly.

Well that’s a scenario that no longer applies to the residents of St. Elizabeth’s Siringo Senior Transitional Housing Program for formerly homeless seniors thanks to the generosity of Ellen Cain and Charles Hammond. These two individuals provided the necessary funds – she through a direct gift and he through a bequest in his will – to convert a second bedroom in one of the complex’s apartments into a laundry room, much to the delight of the program’s eight residents.

“It’s the single best improvement in the program all year,” says Joana Armann, who moved into the complex for homeless seniors in September 2008.

“We all have keys to the room, take care to clean up after using it, and it’s made us very happy.”

This past winter, before the room was finished, one of the residents, coming home after dark with her laundry, got off a bus, slipped on the ice and cracked two ribs. But that’s not going to happen again.

“Now we have a convenient location steps away from our apartments,” says Mike Morelos, another resident. “And whereas in most places it costs between \$1.50 to \$2 per load, here it’s only 75 cents and that helps out all of us on fixed incomes.”



Finishing up a load of wash in the new Siringo laundry room.

But the laundry wasn’t the year’s only improvement at Siringo. The residents also planted an Abundant Harvest Garden in May, tended it during the spring and early summer, then enjoyed the fruits of their labor – garlic, onions, squashes, green and wax beans, tomatoes and peppers – during late summer and fall.

The Abundant Harvest Garden is specially designed to produce high yields in small spaces with reduced water usage. Its success encouraged the residents to plant corn and wildflowers alongside the complex’s fence that parallels the railroad track.

“It was a learning experience,” says Joana. “I’ve grown gardens in California, Nebraska and Michigan, but here in the Southwest it’s so different. Almost everything we planted grew, but we could have taken a course to show us how to really maximize the garden’s potential. Next year, we’ll know better what we’re doing, and maybe even stop that squirrel from eating our beets!”

Joana particularly enjoyed the spaghetti squash and the green beans, while Mike favored the cayenne and habanero peppers. Though these two took the lead on the project – she watering every morning and he every evening – other residents helped along the way.

“We’re all pitching in to make this a better place to live,” Mike says, “and the garden became a project that helped to solidify our community.”

## Resource Center Goes Green

Beginning this November, our Resource Center started using biodegradable cups, bowls, plates and utensils for its twice-weekly meals. Since we are serving up to 180 people on Mondays and Fridays for lunch, we are sending a lot less non-degradable plastic to the local landfill. It might cost a little bit more, but it's good for the environment and good for our guests. If you'd like to help support this effort, please indicate "green" when making a donation.



Because of the dismal economy, nearly double the number of people have been coming for free meals. In response, the Catholic Foundation has made a \$5,000 donation to cover additional food costs.

### Rehouse... continued

lower rents.

"The biggest challenge for lower-income people to move into housing is their coming up with the first and last month's rent, along with security and utility deposits – often thousands of dollars," Shane says. "Also, they may have had past financial trouble making it difficult to pass background screenings and credit checks. But the financial backing of St. Elizabeth allows many individuals, who would not otherwise qualify, to obtain a lease in their name and begin restoring their credit history."

Now living in a studio apartment in Las Palomas, Charles is pursuing his artwork and attending an intensive outpatient treatment program at Life Link for his depression and substance abuse. His specialty is smaller portraits, usually copied from photos, since he doesn't like the "rushed" feeling he gets when drawing sitting models. He's already made some contacts in town, is being exhibited at Café Olé in November and will be in an upcoming display in the Northern New Mexico Art Catalogue.

"This is my chance to start a new life and do something with my art," Charles says. "I have a creative nature, and my art has always brought me back from the brink. But I was always frustrated because I was spending more time on work, whereas here I am focusing on my art. Where else could you get an

opportunity like this to spend time exploring your talents?"

Another artist being helped by the program is Norman Albert. A Navajo from White Horse Lake, Norman attended IAIA and has been a member of the Native American Artisan Program, selling his handcrafted jewelry under the Palace of the Governors portal, since 1982.

His grandparents, too, were jewelers, and Norman grew up helping them and learning the trade. But he has struggled with alcohol his whole life and ended up separated from his wife and two children, living in Albuquerque, working at McDonald's and crafting his jewelry in his spare time. Then, early this year, he was robbed, losing all his money, tools, supplies and unsold



Navajo jeweler Norman Albert sells his wares under the Palace portal.

jewelry.

"I headed back to Santa Fe on the Railrunner, homeless with \$6 in my pocket," he says. "I'm glad there was a shelter I could go to and a program available that gives me the space and time I need to acquire tools and rebuild my jewelry collection."

Norman has an east-facing apartment in St. Elizabeth's Casa Cerrillos complex for adults with disabilities where he determinedly creates new jewelry, focusing on brass belt buckles, brooches and earrings. At the moment, the program is paying his rent while Norman attends outpatient counseling at the Santa Fe Indian Hospital and concentrates on work. His goal is to sell enough of his jewelry to move into an apartment of his own or back into his house with his two sons after his ex-wife remarries.

Like Norman, everyone else in the program works with Shane to develop a Housing Stability Plan to determine how to enhance their income so they will be able to pay full rent and continue living independently once the subsidies end.

"We want people in the program to feel fulfilled and productive," Shane says. "I'm encouraging Charles and Norman to use this time to focus on their art and personal recovery so they can end up doing what they love for a living and be better able to cope with their personal challenges."



## In Their Own Words – Homeless Individuals Share Their Lives

Anna Carvlin, St. Elizabeth's data & development manager, has just published *Dwell At My Door – On Being Homeless, 45 Life Stories*, based on her extensive interviews with past and present shelter clients.

By day, Anna keeps track of the shelter's multitude of data and



assembles it into reports for donors and funding governmental agencies. But outside of work, she's a "staunch word nerd" from a family of journalists – her grandfather was an editor at the *Chicago Tribune* for many years, while two aunts and her mother followed suit to become journalists and editors. Though Anna decided to stray from what her family did best, earning a BS in biology from UIC and a master's in international public health from Tulane, she always remained involved in departmental newsletters and writing groups.

While living in Chicago and working at a meals-service program, she met a homeless man who eloquently recounted his choice to sleep and live outside for four consecutive years, even during the cold winter months, rather than seek help from a nearby shelter. His story challenged some of her preconceived ideas of what homeless people are or do, and this piqued her interest to inquire further.

Because her position at St. Elizabeth offers little interaction with those the

shelter serves, Anna decided to meet with clients firsthand to learn about their travails and hardships through interviews. In this way, she incorporated her love of helping people and social justice with her love of writing. Almost everyone she approached agreed to be interviewed, viewing it as a way to give back to the shelter that had helped them, with the interviews edited only minimally to preserve the speaker's intentions. When you read it, you'll find that it's not only about disappointments and adversity, but also about hope and inspiration.

The entire project – interviewing, compiling, writing – took a year and eight months from start to finish with many thanks to Thomas Keppel, who completed the book's professional layout and design.

*To purchase Dwell At My Door, go to [www.dwellatmydoor.com](http://www.dwellatmydoor.com), [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or visit St. Elizabeth Shelter. All proceeds from the sale of the book go to St. Elizabeth Shelter.*

## Catching Up in the IT World With a Little Help From Some Friends

When St. Elizabeth Shelter was founded 23 years ago, all of its tracking information – on clients, staff and donors – was done on paper. In the intervening years, new technologies have become available to make data collection and retrieval easier. But technology can be expensive and the more complicated it becomes, the more specialized know-how is required to use it. So while the tools have been available, St. E's hasn't always taken advantage of them.

All that changed this year when volunteer Bertram Keppel donated and installed a dedicated server and Active Directory, allowing the shelter to store information and settings in a central database while permitting

administrators to give users different levels of access to this data. In addition



to spending many of his weekend hours setting up Active Directory, Bertram sought out and implemented a very inexpensive internet service to back-up shelter files off-site on a daily basis.

Bertram continues to serve as *de facto* IT manager for the shelter—taking calls from distraught staff, researching ways for our system to work better, or setting up new computers, such as he did for the new Casa Familia Urgent Transition Program – all while holding down a challenging day job as senior systems analyst for Santa Fe County.

Thank you, Bertram, and our many other volunteers who work tirelessly so St. Elizabeth Shelter continues to operate smoothly. Your contribution is priceless.

# Thank You Donors!

*The following individuals, businesses, foundations, organizations, and faith communities have made financial contributions and/or donated gifts-in-kind to St. Elizabeth between August 1, 2009, and October 31, 2009. If we have inadvertently left you out, please contact Anna Carvlin at 982-6611 so we can correct our records. Our thanks also to those who chose to give anonymously and to everyone who brought food, clothing, supplies, etc. for our guests.*

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Thanks to the New Mexico National Guard, St. Elizabeth Shelter has over forty new bunk beds, brand new dressers, and then some. Not only did they donate the beds, they shipped them free of charge to our doorstep and brought them in! They have promised to continue donating much-needed items to the shelter in the future.

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*You, too, can join our fabulous kitchen team. Call Maria Lopez at 982-6611.*





Building Futures...Changing Lives  
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## Winter Wish List

Please call us at 982-6611 or bring the smaller items to St. Elizabeth at 804 Alarid St.

**CLOTHING** – Sleeping bags, sleeping pads or mats, blankets, hats, gloves, scarves, boots, socks, **men's** jackets, sweaters, hooded sweatshirts, long underwear.

**PERSONAL HYGEINE** – Shaving cream, disposable razors, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, soap, lotion, tampons/pads

**NON-FOOD ITEMS** – Non-alcoholic cough syrup, Theraflu®, foot powder, multivitamins, Emergen-C® packets, cough drops, vitamin C, lip balm, band aids, Alka-Seltzer®, Pepto-Bismol®, hand sanitizer, hand wipes, tissues, Lysol® spray, laundry detergent.

**FOOD** – Milk, juice, fresh fruits, bottled water, cheese, ground beef, chicken, pork, ham, turkey, roasts.

**VOLUNTEERS** – Handyman/woman for repairs, front-desk receptionists for four- to eight-hour blocks of time, cooks for lunch (Mondays & Fridays only) or for dinners (any night).

**HOUSEHOLD ITEMS** – The residents at Casa Cerrillos can use a variety of items, including toasters, pots & pans, coffee makers, skillets, silverware, dishes, cooking utensils, irons & ironing boards, throw rugs, laundry baskets, bathroom items, clocks, brooms & mops, window dressings. Please bring these to 3811½ Cerrillos Road (behind Country Dan's).

**LARGER ITEMS** – Stoves, refrigerators, fencing material, paint (black & white), electrical wire (14 or 16 gauge), plywood, lumber (2x4s), metal gutters, outdoor lighting – (please call Casa Cerrillos – 471-3456 – to discuss their current needs before bringing items to the facility at 3811½ Cerrillos Road.)

**8 St. Elizabeth Shelter**



**Hitting High Notes for the Homeless:** Apprentice singers from the Santa Fe Opera held a benefit concert for St. Elizabeth at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis in late July, raising more than \$3,400.