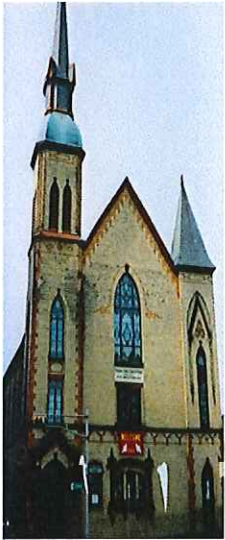


BETHESDA HOUSE OF  
SCHENECTADY, INC.

ANNUAL REPORT

2011-  
2012



Franklin Street



Liberty Street



State Street



Original Lighthouse



Current Lighthouse



**Bethesda House is an interfaith ministry to the homeless,  
disabled and economically disadvantaged citizens of  
Schenectady County, building a just, hospitable and inclusive  
community one person at a time by affirming the dignity and  
addressing the needs of each guest entering this “House of  
Mercy”.**

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**834 State Street, Schenectady, NY 12307, (518) 374-7873  
[www.bethedaschenectadyhouse.org](http://www.bethedaschenectadyhouse.org)**



GOD.....

Please help the

homeless... they need your

HELP

John

*Pillow Case Project 2011*

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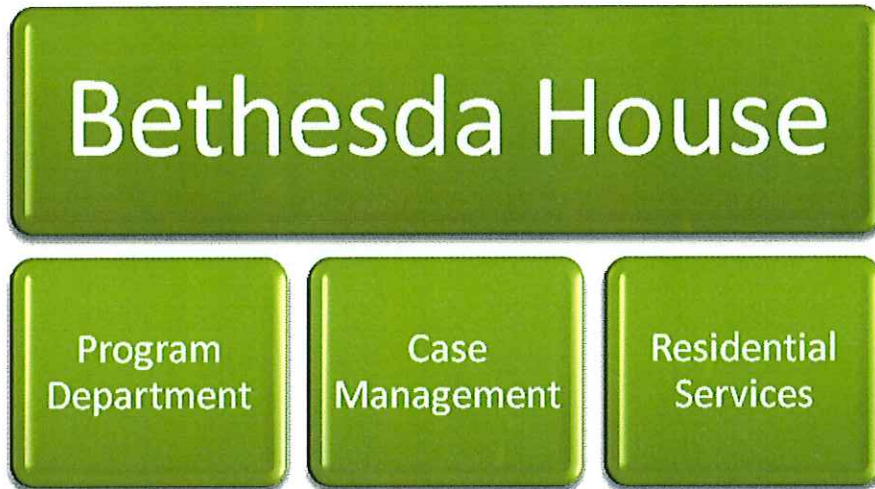
### Special Thanks

*The administration of Bethesda House of Schenectady, Inc. gratefully acknowledges the work of its Directors responsible for providing and gathering data and information necessary to compile this annual report.*

*The support that Bethesda House receives from the interfaith community through generous contributions, in-kind items, and volunteer hours is immeasurable. The concept of Bethesda House was born out of the interfaith community's recognition of the tremendous needs of the homeless and disadvantaged population of our Schenectady community. Over the years, as the agency grew and the needs increased, we were never left to stand alone. Bethesda House is deeply grateful for their support and continued commitment in our shared vision to end homelessness.*



## Bethesda House at a Glance



The numbers cited in the table below only begin to tell the story. These figures represent thousands of hours of case management, emergency services, life skills, and residential services.

<b>Guests Served</b>	<b>Total</b>
Guests	43,668
First Time Guests: of total guests	2,928
Homeless Guests: of total guests	3,811

Program Department Services	Total
Consumer Choice Food Pantry: meals	23,259
Clothing Room	4,513
Showers	225
Telephone	4,248
Hygiene Kits	1,200
Mailboxes <sup>1</sup>	25,498
Computer	1,150
Daily Meal	28,986
Laundry	306
Lockers	5,478

Case Management Services	Total
Housing, permanent and emergency	917
Representative Payee	2,164
Case Management Services	616
Emergency Services	206
Referred for Income	510
Secured Income	240

The numbers reflect cumulative totals of scheduled appointments.

Residential Services	Total
Lighthouse	17
Liberty Apartments	26

- Consumers were referred to the agency from **10** area providers. Nine hundred (900) referrals were made for the following services: **620** Case Management, **200** Emergency Services, and **80** Residential Services.
- Case Management and Program staff referred **650** consumers to area providers to best meet the needs of the individuals.

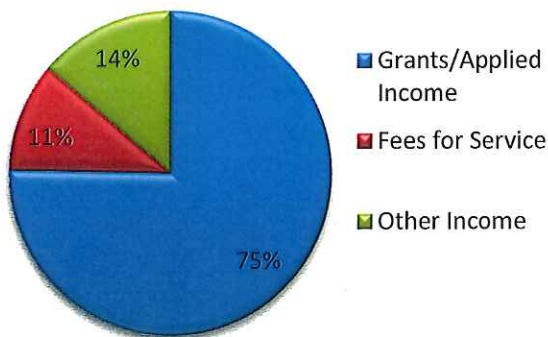
<sup>1</sup> Mailbox calculation: 90 mailboxes, 2 general, 88 individual; 60 individuals use the general mailboxes; 68 individuals have own mailbox, available to users 249 days a year; 80% utilization rate



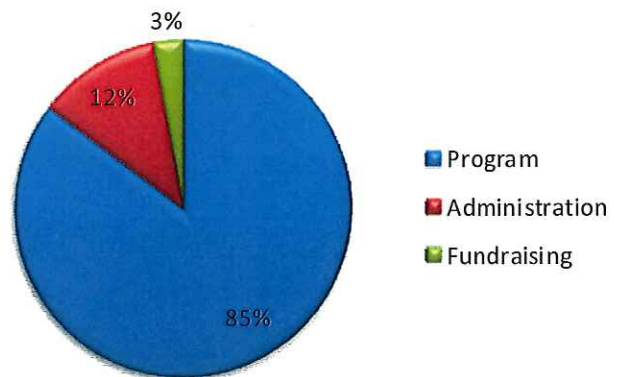
## Revenue & Expenses

Revenue	Amount	Expense	Amount
Grants/Applied Income for Operations	843,024	Program	1,142,106
Fees for Service	121,999	Administration	159,703
Other Income	154,116	Fundraising	37,374
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>1,119,139</b>	<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>1,339,183</b>

### Revenue



### Expense



### In-kind & Volunteers

Volunteer Hours	14,044
Value of Volunteer Hours	306,017
Value of Donated Items	456,727

## Introduction

The administration and staff of Bethesda House of Schenectady, Inc. are pleased to present to you, our Board of Directors, our referring agencies, our consumers, our regulatory and policy making agencies, and friends this Annual Program Report for fiscal year July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012.

Accountability to both the consumers we serve and the community that supports our mission is important to Bethesda House of Schenectady, Inc. Fundamental to the principles and values of the interfaith communities, the staff of Bethesda House views our agency as a living body which is always growing and learning. This report reflects some of the agency's experiences of 2011-2012. We are confident, as we reflect on this year, that we are better positioned to serve those who will come to us in the future because we are learning from our past.

During the 2011-12 funding year, the total number of guests that were served increased 12.5% over the total guests served during 2010-11. This increase is indicative of the struggling economy; our experience is that the face of homelessness and working poor has changed to include people who were once contributors to our economy. We met with individuals who, for the first time in their lives needed assistance. People who lost their employment, their unemployment benefits were exhausted and their savings gone, walked through our doors in search of help.

As we compiled the data for this report, we are mindful that we are presenting consumer related data and demographic information; we are providing the reader with outcome material which may or may not reflect the policy objectives of those who set policy. As an agency whose mission is, "an interfaith ministry to the homeless, disabled and economically disadvantaged citizens of Schenectady County, building a just, hospitable and inclusive community one person at a time by affirming the dignity and addressing the needs of each guest entering this "House of Mercy", success takes on a much more subjective and individualized dimension than mere conformity to given policy objectives. If our consumers report that they are feeling more hopeful about the future, more prepared to deal with life's adversities, and more able to care for themselves and their families because of Bethesda House, we consider such an outcome a success. It is this success that drives the actions of our staff and inspires us to keep working on behalf of our consumers.

This Annual Program Report covers three service dimensions of the agency that include our Program Department: Day Shelter/Emergency Services, Case Management, and Residential Services.

Bethesda House's **Program Department** is comprised of a variety of individual services that meet the needs of Schenectady City and County's homeless and working poor population. Those services include Day Shelter (drop-in center) and Emergency/Essential Services. The goal of these combined programs is to provide crisis management and stabilization in the lives of the individuals who are experiencing the harshness of life and are hopeful to find guidance out of their darkness.

The Program Department has more than one contract source. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the City of Schenectady, and NYS Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) Emergency Services Grant Program (ESGP), Regional Food Bank, Concern for the Hungry, and private foundations and donors support the services offered by this department.

Under the umbrella of the Program Department is the **Case Management Department**. This department provides a variety of services to the homeless, and those who are at risk of becoming homeless to meet their needs and meet the overall goal of moving them out of the cycle of



homelessness and poverty. All Case Managers are available to any guest who is in need of our emergency/essential services. Case Managers assess the needs of a guest and offer them appropriate services including but not limited to: Counseling, guidance, basic needs being met in concert with the Program Department, referrals to other agencies for drug and alcohol addiction and treatment. Referrals with Mental Health treatment, as well as networking with other agencies that provide services that Bethesda House does not provide. Case Managers will assist a guest with rental and/ or utility assistance, and employment assistance.

The Case Management Department has more than one contract source. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the City of Schenectady, and NYS Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) Solutions to End Homelessness Program (STEHP), NYS OMH through Schenectady County, United Way, and private donors support the services offered by this department.

Bethesda House's **Residential Department** has made a commitment to honor and uphold the mission of Bethesda House as staff work diligently with residents to overcome life challenges and help to provide a safe, comfortable and welcoming home for everyone to enjoy and find solace in.

The agency's Lighthouse Program's seven beds and Liberty Apartment's sixteen beds are permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless adults with a history of untreated severe and persistent mental illness and other disabling conditions.

Both residences follow the *Housing First* model which is to provide housing first for the chronically homeless population, and then combine that housing with supportive treatment services in the areas of mental and physical health, substance abuse, education, and employment. We provide advocacy, housing, and a safety net for our residents. Staff addresses the needs of the whole person focusing on self-respect, personal growth and discovery of one's gifts.

The Lighthouse Program's additional three beds are emergency shelter beds for veterans. Agency staff works closely with the Veterans Administration, Albany, providing a safe and stable setting while treatment, financial, longer term services are secured.

The Residential Services Department has more than one contract source. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), NYS Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) Single Room Occupancy (SRO), Veterans Administration, and private donors support the services offered by this department.

Due to the demands our guests and residents require from our staff it is important to recognize that the agency would not be as successful without the incredible selfless support from our volunteers.

Agency staff regularly attends meetings with:

- Housing and Supportive Services Network
- Single Point of Access
- Evictions Task Force
- Dual Recovery Task Force
- Hard to Serve Committee
- Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence
- Schenectady County Re-entry Task Force

- Schenectady Food Providers
- Schenectady Human Services Advisory Board
- Homeless Veterans
- Homeless Services Planning Board
- DSS Commissioner's Advisory Board
- Mental Health Sub-committee
- Agency Chief Executives of Schenectady

Bethesda House has a variety of linkages and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the professional community at large.

**Linkage Agreements:**

Aids Council of NENY  
 Bridge Center of Schenectady, Inc.  
 The Center for Community Justice  
 Catholic Charities AIDS Services  
 Healthy Schenectady Families  
 Legal Aid Society of NENY  
 New Choices Recovery Center  
 Office of Fair Housing  
 SAFE Inc. of Schenectady  
 Schenectady County DSS  
 Schenectady Community Action Program (SCAP)  
 Schenectady Home Town Health Center  
 Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority (SMHA)  
 Sexual Assault Support Services of PPMH  
 The YMCA of Schenectady

**Memorandums of Understanding (MOU):**

Ellis Hospital Department of Psychiatry  
 The YWCA of Schenectady  
 Schenectady County Re-entry Task Force  
 Cornell University Cooperative Extension

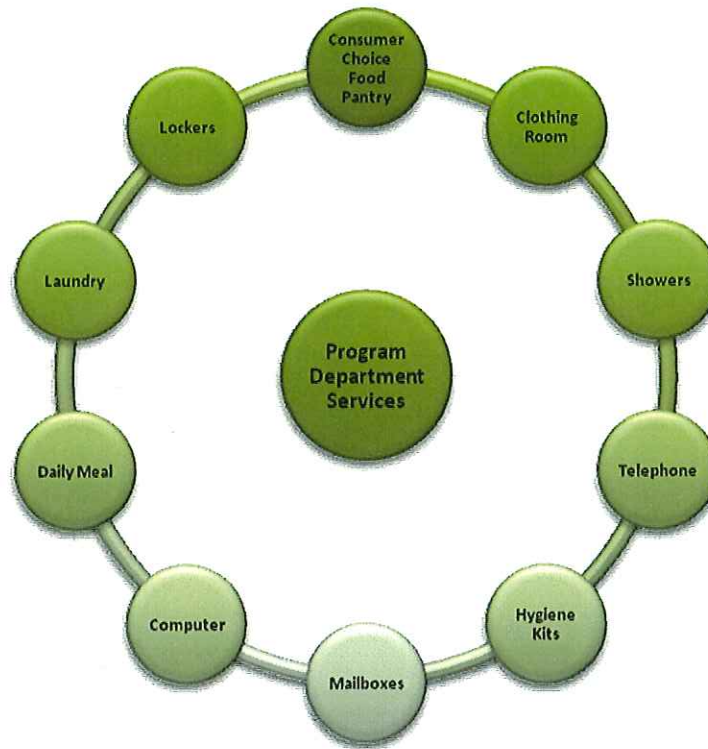
The Management Team is fully invested in the freedom to be creative in pioneering useful solutions to the implementation of positive changes within the agency. In addition, the team is examining how effectively the agency works with area service providers as it is essential that duplication of services is avoided and working collaboratively is in the best interest of the population we serve.

Worker safety is the common thread running through all of our departments and remains a priority.

Once again, the staff and administration of the agency wishes to express our gratitude to the Board of Directors of Bethesda House. Your support and commitment to the agency are salient reminders to all of us of the importance of our work. *Thank you!*



## Program Department



Bethesda House's Program Department is comprised of the Day Shelter (drop-in center) and Emergency/Essential Services. We continued to experience an increase in the number of people who seek our services. Significant increases were realized in our crisis management, food pantry, clothing room, and daily meal numbers. The agency's staff and volunteers worked as a team to meet the increase in demand however; if this trend continues we will be required to modify our policy in addition to increasing our requests for community support.

This department is led by the Program Director who coordinates the team approach with the Day Program Coordinator and the Senior Housing/Outreach Case Manager. Together they work closely with the Directors of Residential Services and Property and Facility Operations; this allows for efficiency as the staff navigate their way through the daily interactions with our consumers. The Program Department meets twice a month with staff to review issues that impact programming and staffing. The House Meeting is once a month, participants include guests, residents, and staff, the topics this year included, but not limited to, non-violence within the agency and in the community, guest issues, respect for themselves, others, and the building, community presentation, and the agency's smoking policy.

Guests and residents are encouraged to continue to be active in changes they would like to see and submit comments and/or suggestions in the ***Suggestion Box***.

Day Shelter and Emergency/Essential Services include referrals to/from, consumer choice food pantry, emergency food pantry, clothing room, telephone, mailboxes, laundry, showers, lockers, computer use, daily meal, crisis management, and a safe haven. Individuals from the community are unconditionally welcome in our Hospitality Center to interact with other guests, access emergency services, or to simply find a safe place to sleep and have their basic needs met.

We are seeing a significant increase in need for emergency services by individuals, singles and families that are at risk of homelessness. This rise is due to the ever growing need of services for the poor and at-risk populations in Schenectady. The consumer driven food pantry has been invaluable to numerous individuals and families; this year the number of individual consumers and families in need grew exponentially over our 2010-11 numbers.

The agency's free clothing room is available as the result of the generosity of our community. Our clothing room volunteers have assisted guests who needed clothing for their new employment, special occasions, and significant events.

The availability of phones and computers has allowed numerous people the opportunity to access emails, arrange for job interviews and follow up on phone calls to Social Security Administration and DSS for benefits and monthly cash assistance. Bus passes are available to assist individuals with transportation for job interviews and medical appointments. Having these emergency services available is a significant accomplishment in the arena for prevention of homelessness for families and single individuals.

During the 2011-2012 year, the Program Department staff streamlined the intake forms for efficient data tracking and data entry into the HUD HMIS reporting system. This system has allowed for an increase in accurate statistical information, which in turn helps to identify areas of need that are not being addressed or where an increase of specific services are required.

The Program Department implemented an on-going six-week nutritional program which is designed to provide nutritional education for our day population and residents. Agency staff and staff from Cornell Cooperative Extension teach class participants a wide range of basic nutritional information from menu planning, healthy food selections, to meal preparation. This program is also designed to teach how to stretch food stamp dollars and when to access local food pantries to supplement their meals.

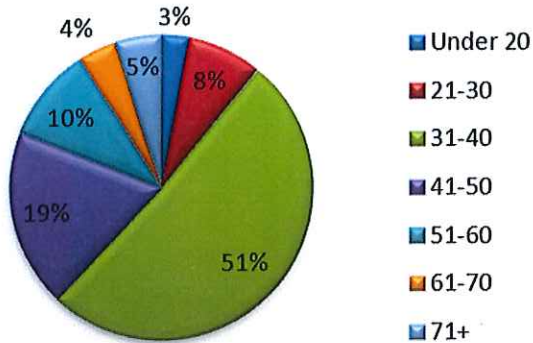
The Program Department's goal for 2012-13 is to make available additional educational programs that focus on basic living skills and literacy.

The Directors are working with area congregations to increase our volunteer pool and promote community involvement. We are actively reaching out to area colleges and local high schools offering opportunities for interns and community hours.

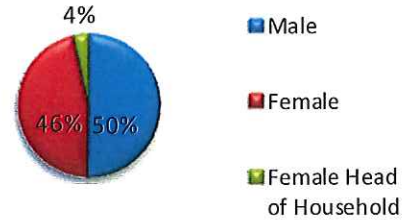


**Program Department Demographics Based on the Number of Consumers Served: 7,891**

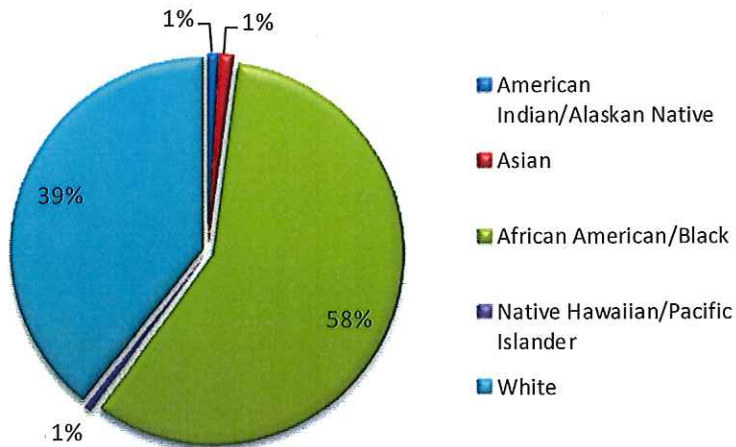
**Age**



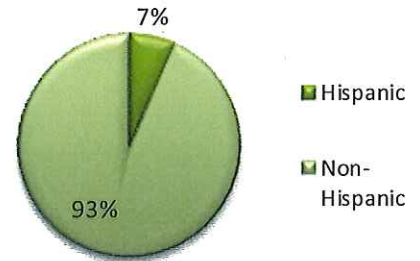
**Gender**



**Race**

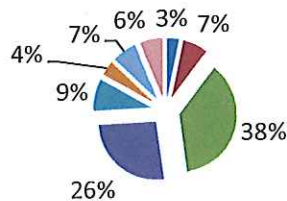


**Ethnicity**



**Neighborhood**

- Bellevue
- Mont Pleasant
- Hamilton Hill
- Downtown
- North Schenectady
- Union Street
- Central/State Street
- Woodlawn



# Day Shelter/Emergency Services Stories

**BW** was a homeless Veteran suffering from PTSD. He was referred to Bethesda House for crisis case management and emergency services assistance. The department of Social Services was in the process of closing his case which left him with no financial resources needed to support basic living needs. Bethesda House's staff contacted the Veteran Administration, Empire Justice Center for legal assistance, and the Department of Social Services in order to create a reasonable plan for assistance and permanent housing. Program and Case Management staff met with the Director of Residential Services and discussed, with the client, the possibility of entering our Emergency Veteran Housing program. Staff worked with staff from the Veterans Administration and was able to place BW the following day in our residence. Case Management worked with an attorney from Empire Justice Center and was able to obtain on-going Temporary Assistance and food stamps. Eventually, BW was able to receive a VASH voucher which subsidized 100% rental assistance and is now in his own apartment. He stated, "Being homeless is a terrible thing."

**PG** was a guest of Bethesda House for years. He was homeless and in need of a variety of services. Bethesda House provided basic needs services: mailbox, shower, laundry, clothing, food from our pantry, and a daily meal while program and case management staff worked to build a level of trust. Eventually, PG felt comfortable to work with a Case Manager who was able to find him housing. He continued to seek essential services from Bethesda House while he met with case managers and other area providers to get his life back. PG attended various job fairs where he was able to gain employment. PG comments, "Without question, Bethesda House has changed my life for the better. Not only does Bethesda House offer me useful services, but it has also taught me how to deal with people better. I learned the value of patience." He continues with, "Bethesda House helps many people. All of the services they offer allow the staff to help different people; "everyone needs help in their own way."



## Case Management Department



This department is led by the Program Director who coordinates the team approach with the Day Program Coordinator and the Senior Housing/Outreach Case Manager. This team works closely with the Residential Department to address the needs of our guests and residents.

The Case Managers have been cross trained to assist all people at risk of homelessness and people of immediate need, to receive the Emergency/Essential Services that Bethesda House offers. The department meets once a month with program and residential staff to review issues that impact programming and staffing.

The Case Management personnel cover the following needs:

**Initial Intake and Assessment** – triage and assess immediate needs; eligibility for entitlement programs and the need for immediate referrals to other agencies.

**Financial Case Management** – managing the SSI/SSD benefits for disabled and identified guests. A budget is established with each person in our Rep Payee Program that ensures rent, utilities, food, medical care and other essential needs are met and paid for prior to the guest receiving a personal spending allowance.

**Shelter/ Housing** – The Case Management team provides emergency services to assist homeless individuals with emergency shelter placement. Guests can continue to work with Case Management



to obtain steady income and permanent housing or to obtain placement in Drug/ Alcohol rehab, subsidized or programmatic housing.

Bethesda House's **Sr. Housing/Outreach Case Manager** has increased landlord relationships to allow for placement of homeless people in safe and secure housing. This position's primary responsibilities include homeless prevention; helping individuals remained housed, and rapid re-housing; assisting homeless individuals with finding permanent housing. Many strong on-going working relationships with landlords have been developed and this has increased the outreach to house chronically homeless people. The Case Management staff created an extensive landlord database which aids in the success of securing affordable housing.

The staff assigned to the Program and Case Management department meets with individuals to assess emergency service needs and assists the same in navigating Bethesda House's intake system in order to obtain the appropriate service. We are seeing a significant need for emergency services by individuals, singles and families that are at risk of homelessness. The number of individuals served by Bethesda House increased dramatically during the last fiscal year; this is directly related to the struggling, anemic economy. Bethesda House anticipates this increase to continue during the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

The **Representative Payee** program is essential in that this service helps to prevent individuals from becoming homeless, assists individuals in finding permanent housing, and aids in the financial stability for our consumers. Many individuals who do not participate in this program find themselves being taken advantage of by others and run the risk of losing their minimal income to drugs/alcohol and other addictions because of their inability to handle and manage their one-time a month payment. The self-determination that people gain from living independently is remarkable. The average income of a participant is \$761 a month. Regardless of the amount, consumers are living on their own and not with family, group homes or having to share living quarters that could possibly be with someone that could take advantage of them.

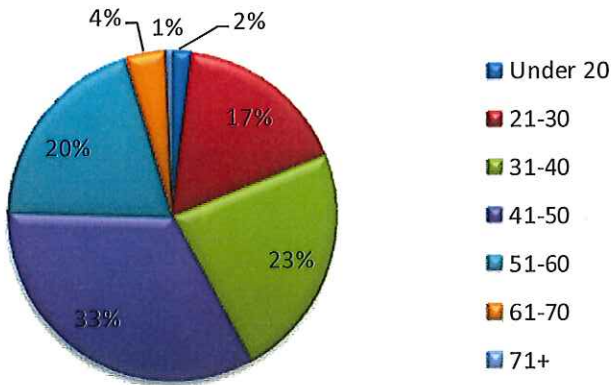
During the 2011-12 fiscal year, the number of participants in this program increased and stabilized at 76. The Case Management staff work closely with area providers, particularly with Schenectady County DSS Protective Services for Adults. The Case Manager works with each participant to develop a budget which ensures that all bills (rent, utility, phone, medical, etc.) are paid in addition to allowing for personal needs money to purchase necessary items. During 2012-2013, the Case Managers will continue to collaborate with the appropriate staff and area providers to ensure that consumers secure housing placement and financial stability.

Consumer feedback gained at House Meetings has provided us with valuable information. In 2012-2013 we are implementing a consumer satisfaction survey to gain more insight on the effectiveness of the services we offer. Our goal is to ensure that consumers meet their milestones and that staff are mindful of the services the individuals are seeking. We will give careful review of the documentation we receive.

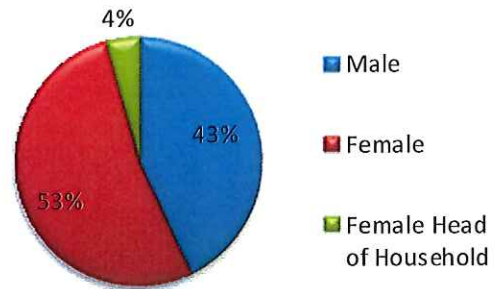


# Case Management Housing and Emergency Services Based on the Number of Consumers Served: 1,289

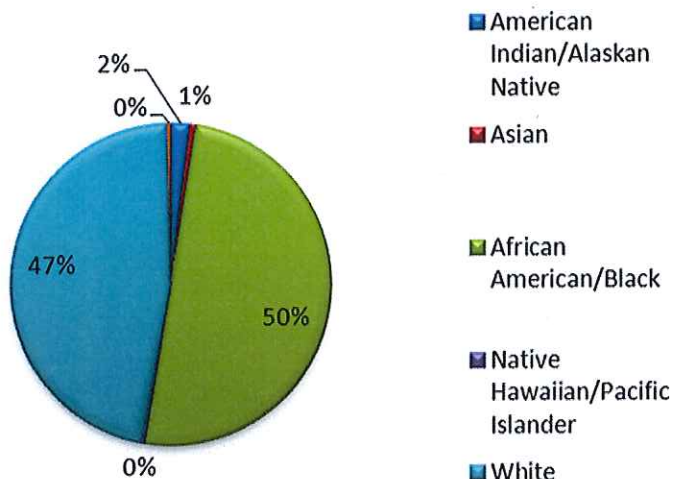
## Age



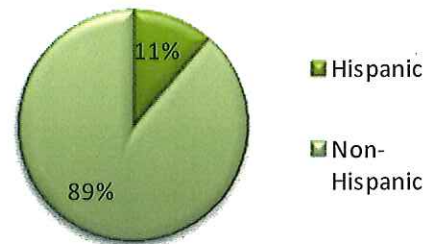
## Gender



## Race



## Ethnicity

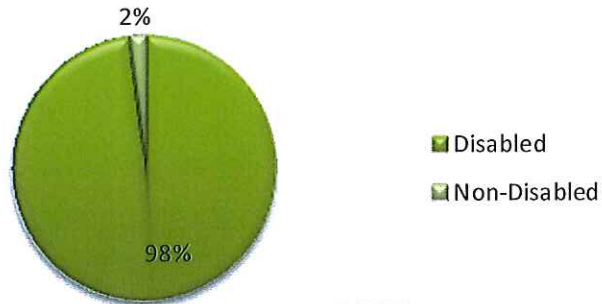


## Neighborhood

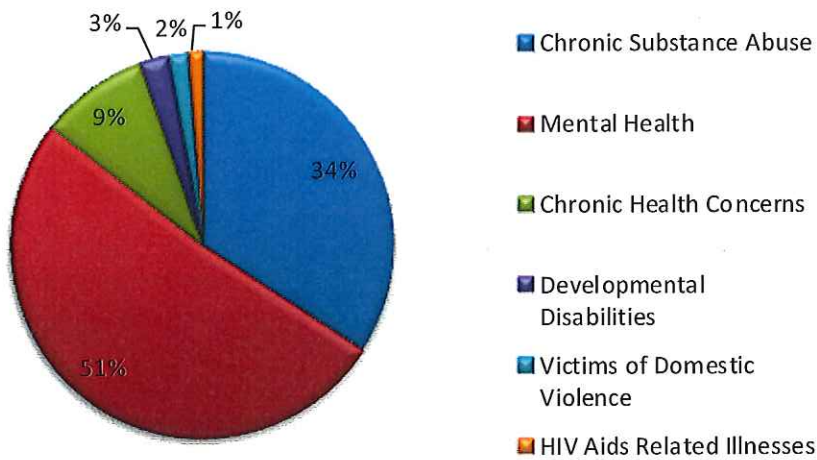


**Case Management Housing and Emergency Services Based on the Number of Consumers Served: 1,289**

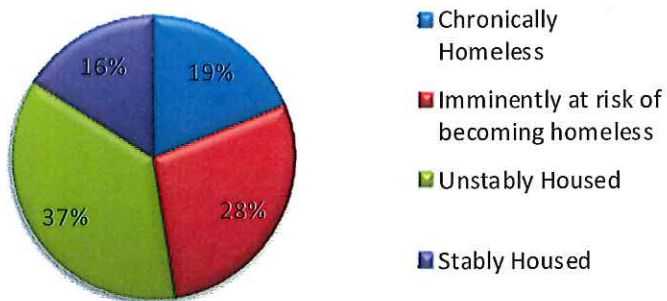
**Percent Disabled/Non-Disabled**



**Disability**

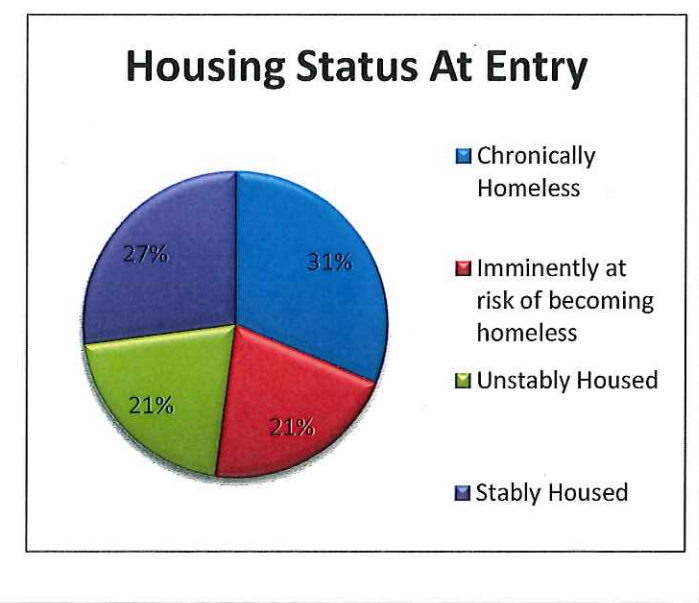
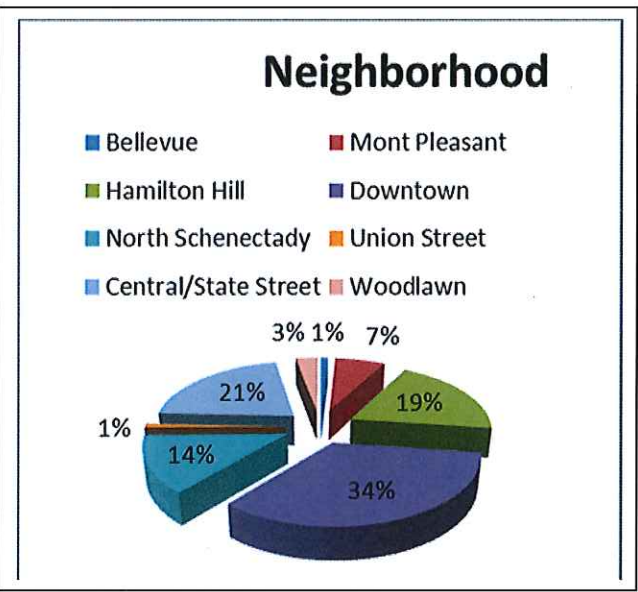
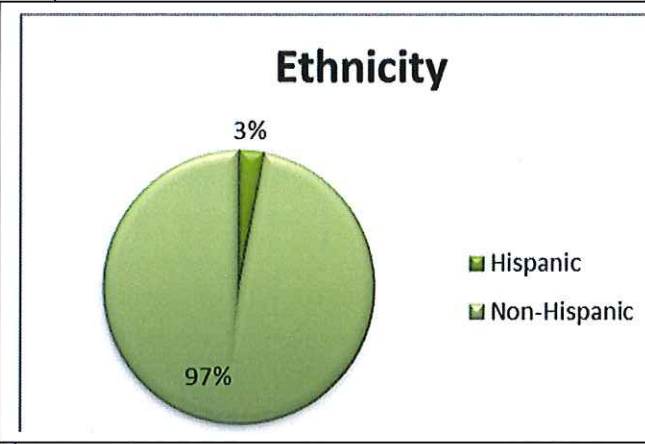
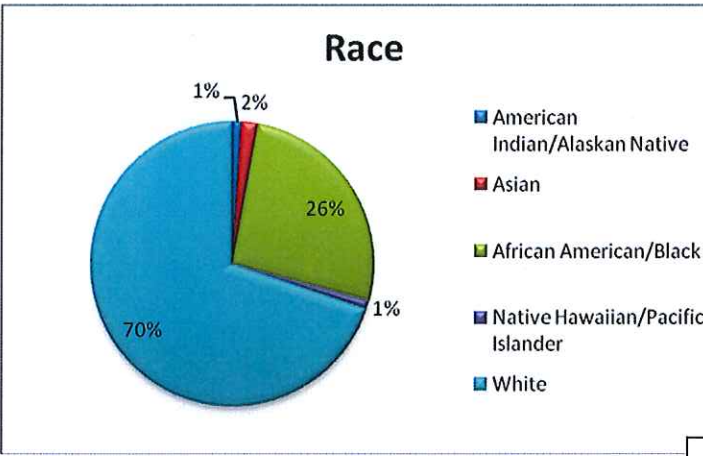
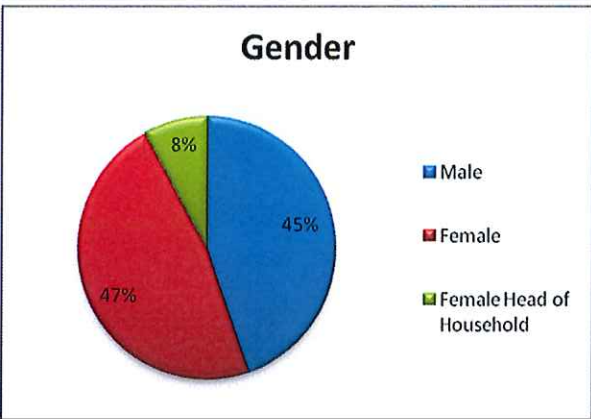
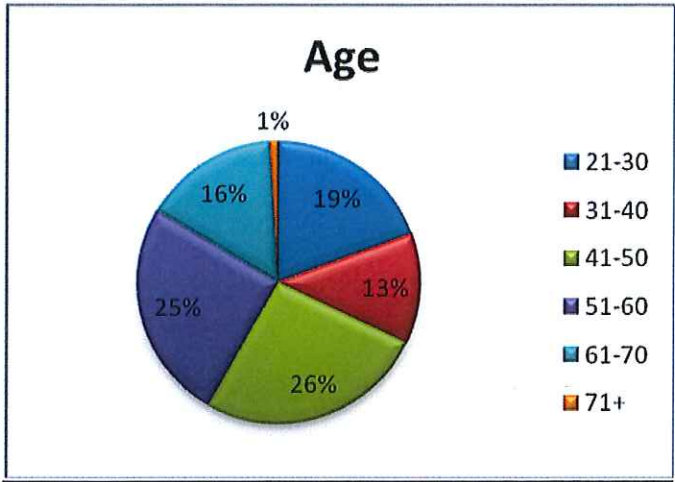


**Housing Status At Entry**





# Case Management Representative Payee Services Based on the Number of Consumers Served: 96



## Women's Group


Every week an average of thirty-three (33) women meet to discuss their life issues and seek emotional support as they work through the effects of abuse. Our confidential group meets weekly and addresses a variety of issues related to domestic violence. The group provides a comfortable atmosphere to develop healthy relationships in a nurturing environment. The group is facilitated by professionals from Bethesda House, YWCA and Sexual Assault Support at Planned Parenthood.

There are several volunteers that come each week to assist with the weekly meal and provide additional support as needed. The group discusses topics such as drug and alcohol addiction, housing crisis issues, abusive relationships and their children. All participants provide confidential and emotional support to those who attend. The facilitators are available for outside referrals and counseling. Occasionally, guest speakers from the community come in to discuss topics that are of interest to the women. Facilitators plan community outings such as a yearly picnic and a Mother's Day special luncheon; when financial assistance is available, crafts are purchased for attendees to make gifts and holiday projects. The group receives a lunch and for most, is the only meal that they may eat for the day. The group is free and could be the only source of support or counseling that is available.

## Facilitators

Bethesda House is fortunate to have dedicated facilitators who are on-site once or twice a week, making themselves available to all guests and residents who are interested in the services they provide.

The facilitators are:



The Aids Council	• Twice per week
National Grid Advocate	• Once per week
Blood Pressure Clinic, run by volunteers	• Once per week
Tenant Training in collaboration with SCAP, LegalAid, & Center for Disability Services	• Once per quarter
Empire Justice Center	• Once per week
Fidelis	• Twice per month
CDPHP	• Twice per month



## Women's Group Stories

NJ is a 24 year old African American woman who grew up in the foster care system. She stated after aging out of foster care she soon found herself homeless with nowhere to turn. While living on the streets she suffered severe sexual and physical abuse. After several years of homelessness, going from shelter to shelter, she was tired of living on the streets. She relocated to Schenectady for a fresh start. NJ came to Bethesda House seeking assistance with her Social Security Benefits. She met with the Case Manager who assisted her in our Representative Payee program and located permanent housing. NJ started attending Women's Group every Thursday. She stated the confidence and strength she has now has changed her life and that she would like to share with other women who are in abusive situations. She enrolled in college and began working on her IT Degree. She stated, "thanks to the support and friendship I found at Bethesda House, I am now following my dream. I want to set a positive example for others."

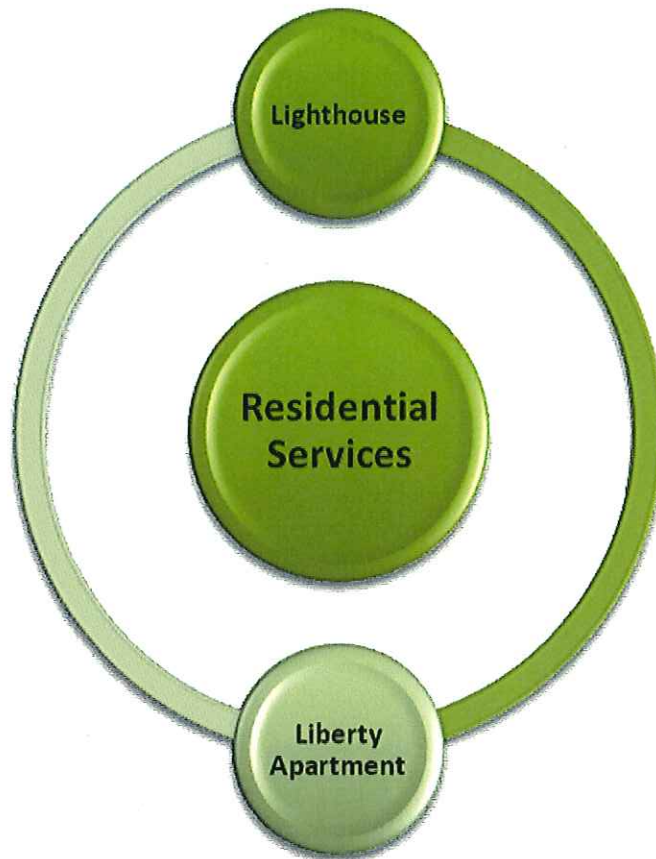
AZ married young. Within a short time she found herself with five children, one mentally disabled, and an abusive husband. Due to their economic status, their living environment was poor. AZ and her children were beaten on a regular basis and they lived a life of terror for years. She never found the strength to leave her husband, yet one fateful day he left her.

AZ made the decision to set a course for a better life for her and her children; however, it was not an easy task. She worked several low wage jobs that held no possibility for growth. Her self-worth deteriorated as there was no one in her life that believed in her. One day AZ found a lucrative job which helped her develop a support system and build her self-esteem. During the next few years, AZ grew in strength and independence. She was able to secure better living arrangements which allowed her children and new grandchild to remain living with her.

AZ struggled to balance her job with the demands of motherhood. She stretched herself too thin and her circumstances were taking its toll. She found herself in jeopardy of being evicted because of the amount of people living with her and her employment was threatened as a result of the number of days she had to take off because of her mentally ill daughter.

Eventually, AZ lost her home and her job. She could not find her way out of the darkness but, she did not want to give up. She walked into Bethesda House in search of help. Our Senior Housing/Outreach Case Manager worked with AZ to get her housed and offered resources to get her mentally ill daughter the help that she needed. The Case Manager also suggested to AZ that she join the Women's Group. AZ's time in the Women's group has served her well. With the support of many women who can relate to her pain she is finally finding her own voice. She has her own apartment again and she is no longer the primary caretaker for her daughter and her grandchildren. She was able to get an Associate's Degree and is back working a full time job. She is at a place where she feels valued and respected.

## Residential Services



Bethesda House's Residential Services embraced the challenges of encouraging and assisting each resident as they worked on the goals of their individual service plans. Staff is an essential component of the primary success for each resident.

This department's talented team, which comprises of the Director of Residential Services and the Residential Case Manager work closely with the Directors of Program and Property and Facility Operations; this allows for efficiency as the management staff navigate their way through the needs of our residents. The Residential Services Department meets twice a month with staff to review issues that impact programming and staffing. The Director and the Residential Case Manager regularly attend the Single Point of Access meetings to provide a setting in which to:

- identify resident's needs
- seek community services
- build accountability to the treatment plan among service providers
- develop treatment recommendations and review medications
- develop social/vocational/employment goals
- address rep payee issues
- create personal goals and objectives
- seek input and evaluation on employment and/or vocational options
- review all mainstream benefits
- review and discuss options to assist residents in obtaining independence and self-sufficiency.



The Director of Residential Services and/or the Residential Case Manager have a scheduled meeting with each resident once a week; this is to establish a level of consistency and to demonstrate that each resident is important. The Director of Residential Services and the Residential Case Manager are involved in the daily heart beat of the department and most often interact with each resident informally. During the scheduled meeting, progress towards goals, immediate concerns, and any modifications to the established services plan are discussed.

Each resident, in collaboration with the Director of Residential Services and/or the Residential Case Manager, design the most appropriate path to manage mental health issues and addictions. Our staff will often attend appointments with the residents and assist with follow up and treatment as needed. Bethesda House provides transportation to medical appointments and meetings as needed.

Residents are encouraged to participate in the Representative Payee program. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the residents receive Social Security benefits and participate in the Representative Payee program. The remaining eighteen percent (18%), who are not receiving Social Security benefits, are working closely with their Case Manager in order to collect benefits. All of the residents who are currently not receiving benefits have applied and are waiting for approval.

During 2011-12 residents participated in the nutritional educational program led by staff and staff from the Cornell Cooperative Extension. Staff worked with residents to reinforce healthy menu planning and stretching food stamp dollars.

**The Lighthouse Program** is a ten-bed facility located in the Mont Pleasant neighborhood in Schenectady. Seven beds are for single adults who were chronically homeless and have a disability; three beds are emergency shelter beds for veterans. The goal for all of the residents living at the Lighthouse is greater independence. The staff at the Lighthouse works with each individual to take more responsibility in all areas of daily living. Thirty-six percent (36%) of the residents have lived at the Lighthouse for five years or longer; eighteen percent (18%) of the residents recently reconnected with family members and subsequently left the program.

The Life Skills Counselor and the Resident Assistants work with the residents, helping them to develop skills so that they will be comfortable being active participants in their community. The residents participate in community activities weekly. Activities include trips to area grocery stores and super markets, movie theaters, parks, shopping malls, and restaurants. Two of our residents attend church regularly. Most of the residents have established significant relationships with members of the community and look to them to provide support during difficult times.

Residents who require more intensive staff intervention have access to one-on-one Life Skills Counselor interactions. The Life Skills Counselor works with the residents to provide graduated instruction and remains a presence until they can independently complete the task. For those residents with physical disabilities, the Life Skills Counselor encourages as much independence as possible and assists with tasks that are beyond their physical capabilities. The Life Skills Counselor also assists residents with nutritional counseling, menu planning, food and personal needs shopping and assists with planning recreational activities.

Many of the residents served at the Lighthouse have never known a home of their own. They have lived under a tree or a bridge, in an attic or in an abandoned building; places not meant for human



habitation. All of our residents come in with survivor skills engrained into their thinking. They live on the defensive, in filth, eating out of a dumpster, and resting whenever and wherever they can. The skills necessary to survive a life on the street differ greatly from those necessary to keep a house. The average homeless person does not think about sanitation, they think only of survival.

During 2012-13 staff will increase their efforts to encourage the residents to take a more active role in the upkeep of their home and to become more integrated into their community. With the assistance of the Case Manager, the Resident Assistants, and the Life Skills Counselor each resident will continue to have the opportunity to work one on one with staff to develop the skills necessary to keep their home neat and tidy.

The **Liberty Apartments** is a fifteen unit, sixteen-bed facility, located on State Street in Schenectady. Residents live privately and independently while having access to supportive staff 24/7. The fifteen units are single room occupancies and are complete with their own bathroom and fully functional kitchenette. Each resident is encouraged to make their home their own and to stay permanently. Twenty-nine (29%) percent of the residents have been in their homes since the facility opened in January 2010. Forty-three (43%) of the residents have been in their homes for nine months or longer. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the residents left to improve their living situation in the community.

Bethesda House's Day Shelter is a primary point of contact/entry into the system of care. The residents living at Liberty House apartments have access to all of the services provided by Bethesda House. They make use of the Hospitality Center Monday-Friday, the clothing room, food pantry, and the medical clinics offered. Bethesda House provides outreach through the local business community; residents have access to services through National Grid, Fidelis, and a representative from The Veteran's Administration who comes weekly.

Residents are encouraged to participate in monthly house meetings where they are able to express their concerns. The Director of Property and Facility Operations attends all house meetings in order to answer resident concerns. The residents plan social and recreational activities during the meetings. Bethesda House has a van available to transport residents to community activities.

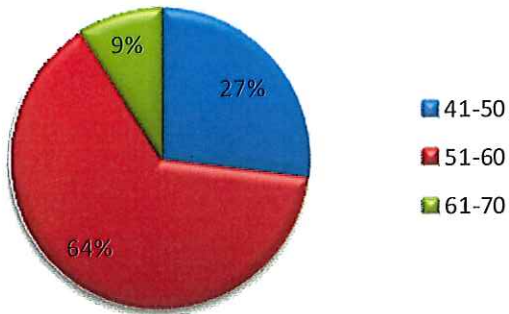
The goal for all of the residents living at the Liberty Apartments is greater independence. The design of the program does allow for greater autonomy. However, the greater percent of the residents seek interaction with other residents, our Day Shelter population and staff. In addition, ninety percent (90%) of the residents have planned their goals for their service plans with minimal assistance from staff.

Obtaining secure and stable housing is the first step in alleviating the inconsistencies and trauma associated with living on the streets. It takes a great deal of time for a homeless person to let go of street living and to trust that they are worthy of this new life. With each step forward, there can be several steps back, but with patience and persistence no goal is out of reach.

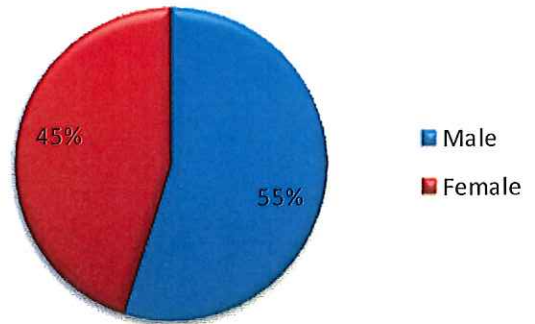


**Lighthouse Permanent Supportive Housing Demographics Based on the Number of Consumers Served: 11**

**Age**



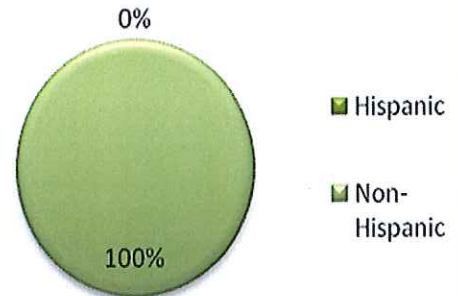
**Gender**



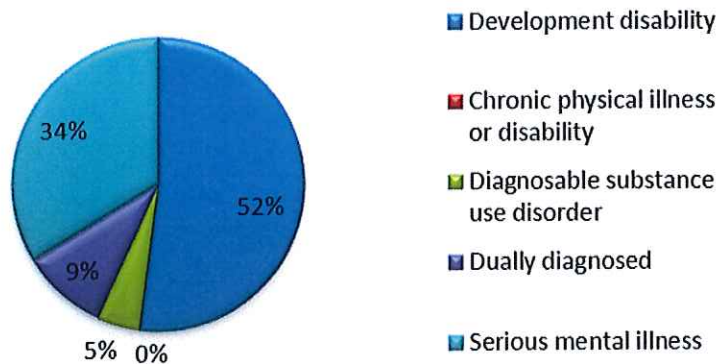
**Race**



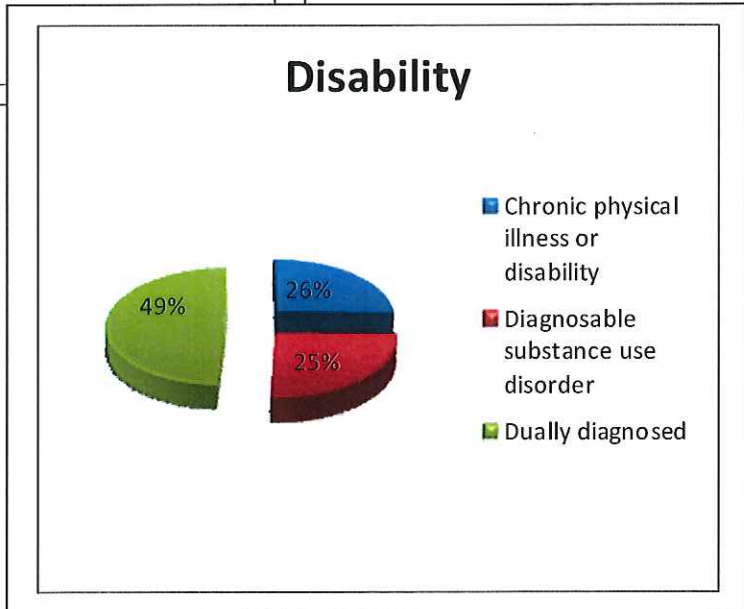
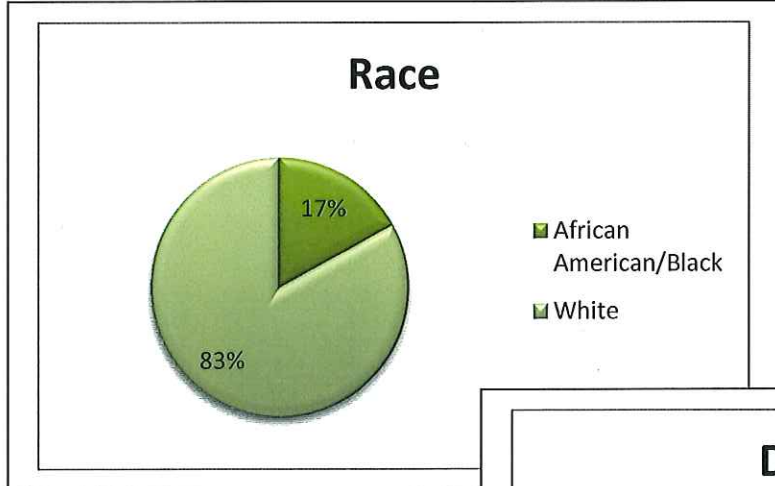
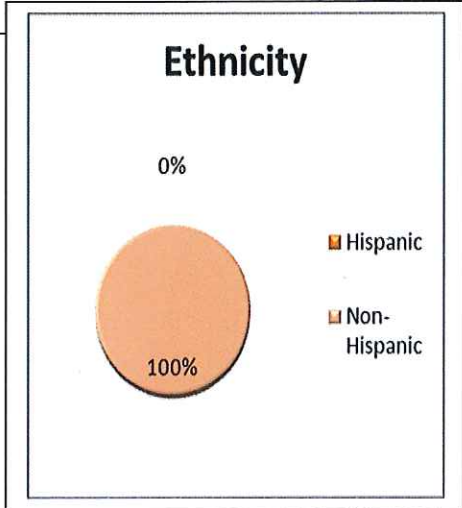
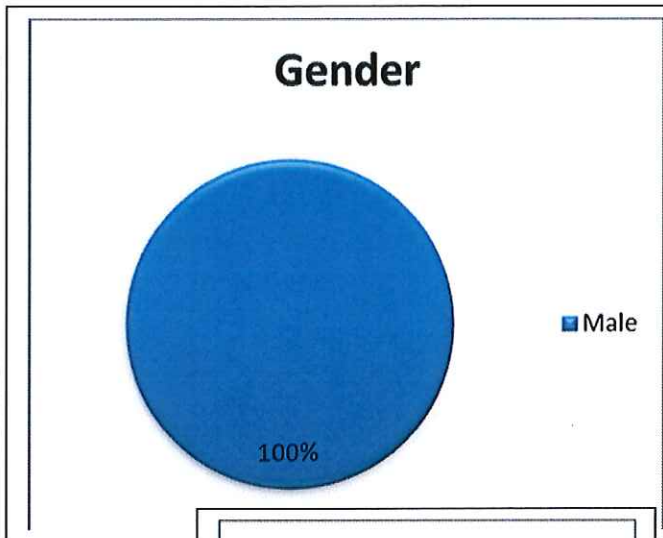
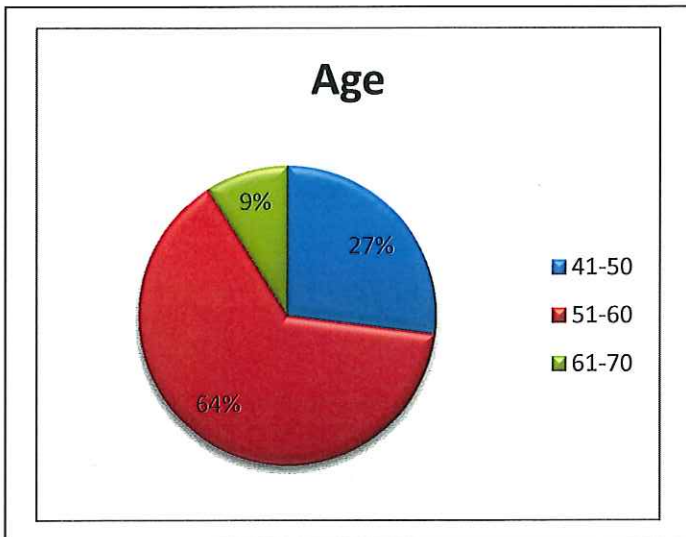
**Ethnicity**



**Disability**



# Lighthouse Emergency Shelter Veterans Demographics Based on the Number of Consumers Served: 6

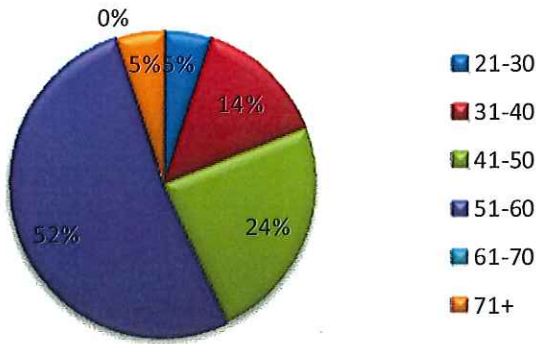




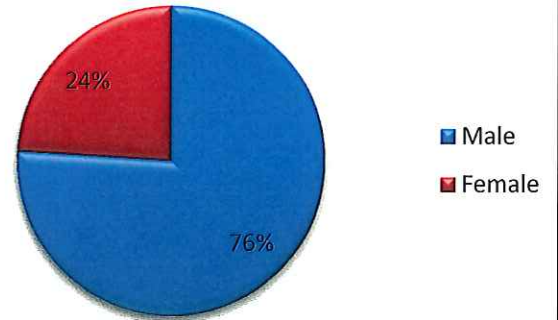
**Liberty Apartments Demographics Based on the Number of Consumers Served:**

**26**

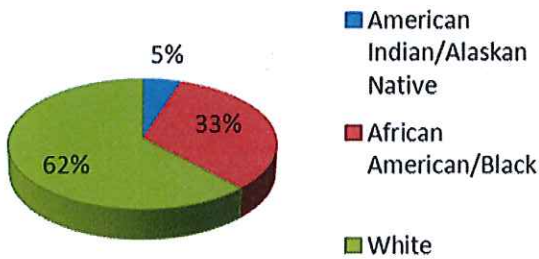
**Age**



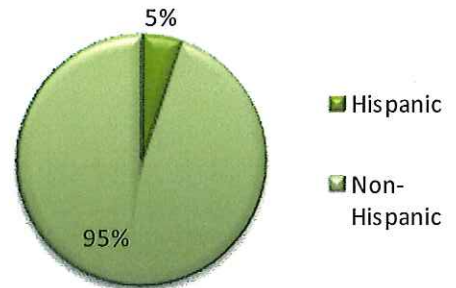
**Gender**



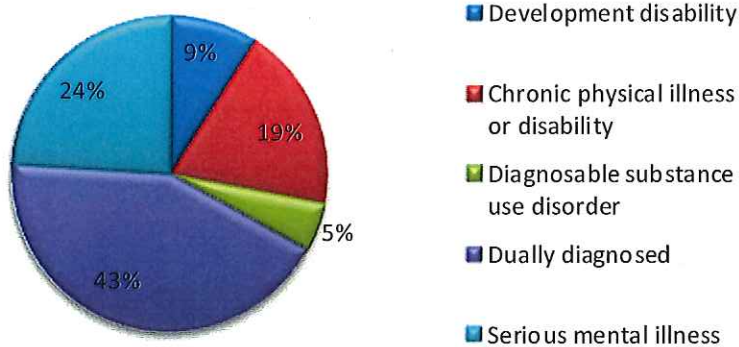
**Race**



**Ethnicity**



**Disability**



# Resident Stories

“Bethesda House gives more than just second chances.” CR a middle aged man has been living at the **Lighthouse** for about a month now and has been thankful for every second of it. Growing up, CR lived all over the country. Ranging from Haiti to Brooklyn to New Jersey, he had a taste of just about everything. CR has six sisters and six brothers as well as a dad and a step mom. Growing up, his parents had trouble making ends meet. CR did not know his biological mother growing up and he said it left a hole in his heart. His biological mother passed away during his senior year of high school just a week after CR had met her for the first time. After learning of his mother’s passing, CR decided to drop out of school at the age of 18 with only 3 months left until graduation. CR bounced from house to house, job to job, with really no goal or purpose. He began using and selling drugs. Starting as a side interest, drugs soon took over his life. CR went to Saint John’s Bread of Life, an outreach program in Brooklyn, to seek help. He was sent to different programs and finally was sent to Bethesda House where he has been for 12 years. CR hit his breaking point in April of 2012 when he realized he couldn’t live the same life anymore. “I was living a gladiator life style; I thought I was invincible.” CR turned to Bethesda House for help and they immediately responded. “Bethesda House gave me more than just a second chance, it saved my life and I’m on my way to having a life.” Without Bethesda House, CR believes he would still be Homeless in Brooklyn, doing drugs, and possibly even dead. CR feels that Bethesda House offers “unconditional service regardless of looks, lifestyle, or age.” CR looks forward to being married someday and having a family of his own.

LN is a middle aged woman who has been living at Bethesda House’s **Liberty Apartments** for two years. Growing up, LN loved school; she had a lot of friends, and even a couple different part-time jobs. Her family life was pretty average, with a few minor issues. She moved all over the east area growing up. LN received her high school diploma when she was 17 years old. When LN started to be abused by her boyfriend, she went to a women’s shelter for assistance. She was then informed of Bethesda House and the services offered. LN began coming to Bethesda House to use facilities such as the food pantry. Not long after LN applied for housing and was one of the lucky few chosen. She has loved living here ever since. LN feels very safe at Bethesda House. “The staff members are always watching out for the residents.” One of LN’s favorite things to do is tease Anne, the Director of Residential Services. “I always call her trouble and she calls me double trouble.” Without Bethesda House, LN said she would be homeless and on the streets. Also, she wouldn’t feel safe and secure living on her own. LN doesn’t have a close family to call her own so, she considers Bethesda House her family. “I love living here and couldn’t imagine my life any different.”



## Looking Back

### Back-pack Program:

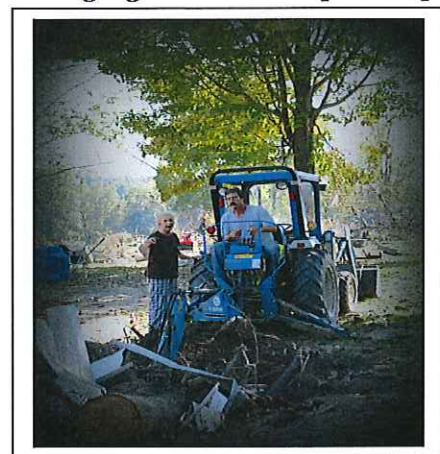
We began the year working with Wal-Mart, Staples, Target, and Office Max collecting donations to offset the cost of supplies needed for our Back-pack Program. With the help of volunteers we were able to distribute 75 back-packs to Schenectady elementary schools. We were happy that we increased the distribution over our 2010-11 program and established strong relationships with area vendors.

The anticipation of the new school year brings, for many children, excitement and anxiety. Re-connecting with school friends, meeting a new teacher and progressing toward the graduation year is exciting. However, for many Schenectady children the financial resources to prepare them for the school year is very low and in many cases non-existent. Walking into school the first day unprepared creates anxiety and sets the child up for failure. Bethesda House's *Back to School Backpack Program* is designed to prepare as many children as funds allow by providing backpacks filled with all the required school supplies. Our project provides the necessary tools for children to use as they begin their new school year; with the proper supplies confidence is established.



### Community Giving Back:

In September 2011 guests, residents, volunteers, and staff arrived in Schoharie County to help flood victims; the day was incredibly overwhelming and rewarding at the same time. The day was filled a sense of camaraderie as we interacted with the Schoharie's residents helping them locate their belongings and clean up their property.

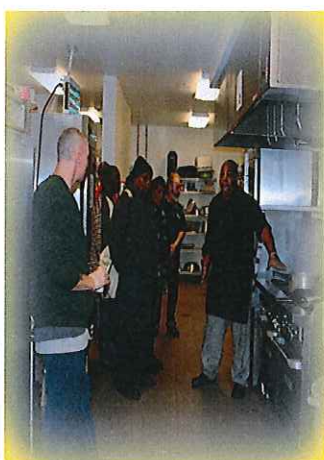




In December, guest volunteers and staff volunteered for the Salvation Army bell ringing! We were happy to participate; being a part of this tradition of giving from the heart was a great experience for our guest volunteers and staff.

**Education:**

During 2011-12 we began our *Nutritional Education* program. Bethesda House's on-going **6-week nutritional program** is designed to provide nutritional education for our day population and the residents in our residential program. Agency staff and staff from Cornell Cooperative Extension teach class participants a wide range of basic nutritional information from menu planning, healthy food selections, to meal preparation. Participants learn the benefits of healthy eating and the positive effects of weight loss and healthier bodies. The program staff teaches how to stretch food stamp dollars and when to access local food pantries to supplement their meals.



Jake Rowe, Food and Nutrition Coordinator, began preparing for our November 24<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving dinner days before our feast. The air was filled with the aroma of turkeys roasting and dressing cooking as preparations for the anticipated number of dinner guests drew near.

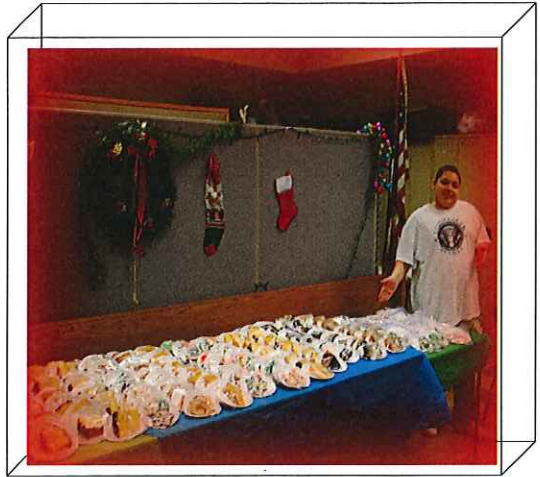
All joined in a prayer of thanksgiving, guests and residents stood to express words filled with emotion as we celebrated friendship and compassion for our fellow community members. Over three-hundred dinners were served; student volunteers moved around the dining room to serve seasonal pies and desserts.





The holiday season brought many new partnerships; we received in-kind donations that enhanced the lives of many of Schenectady's most needy. We received a wonderful supply of hygiene kits and hats, gloves, and scarves. Bethesda House was blessed that our community was so generous and opened their hearts especially during this difficult economic climate.

December 23rd we had our roving holiday meal; we sang and rejoiced in all the gifts of this season of joy and love.



**Hunger Awareness Day 2012:**

How fortunate that Bethesda House had a great group of volunteers to help staff and Board members prepare and serve our meal on Hunger Awareness Day. Mayor Gary McCarthy partook in the day's events and staff from Cornell Cooperative Extension presented nutritional information. Over 150 meals were served!



## Financial Summary

Bethesda House ended the 2011-12 fiscal year with a deficit of \$220,044; this deficit includes depreciation for capital items supported by Foundations and government contracts.

The agency's most significant fiscal challenge this year was related to fundraising. Bethesda House is significantly affected by the downturn in the economy as well as its slow recovery. Historically *and* understandably, when there is a loss of confidence in the economy there is a reduction of donor dollars. In Human Services agencies like Bethesda House, when the economy is weak there is a direct correlation in the increase in the number of people in need of services.

Due to the fluctuations in our contributions, structural changes were made specific to the agency's staffing. As a result of position vacancies and restructuring, the agency realized a 4.8% cost saving for total compensation. In addition, the agency's staff was committed to a conservative approach in overall spending in an effort to offset the fundraising shortfall.

Bethesda House is taking an active approach exploring new initiatives, private foundations, and cultivating a more extensive donor base. The agency's Board of Director's made a commitment to become more active in the 2012-13 fiscal years fundraising goals.



# Bethesda House of Schenectady, Inc.

## Management Team

**Kimarie Sheppard, Executive Director**

**Danny Payne, Program Director**

**Anne McGhee, Director of Residential Services**

**Harold (Butch) Fogg, Director of Property and Facility Operations**





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