



Catholic Charities USA Healthy Housing Initiative

YEAR ONE REPORT | JANUARY 2020 - JANUARY 2021



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USA®

Working to Reduce Poverty in America

Preface

While many organizations work to alleviate homelessness, our Catholic Charities network has been increasingly concerned about an oftentimes invisible subset of this group—those who have been chronically homeless, that is, without housing for over a year or more. Many people in this group live with coexisting health and mental health conditions that place them at extreme risk. They remain particularly vulnerable as a result of not knowing how to access the social safety net or adequate healthcare. Realizing that addressing the needs of this population is quite ambitious, we remain convinced that the Gospel compels us to set out on a path to tend to these individuals and families who exist along the margins of our society. To that end, Catholic Charities and Catholic Healthcare joined forces to establish a pilot program for healthy housing, specifically for the chronically homeless people with whom we interact, in five cities across the US.



While the onset of the pandemic somewhat hindered the pace of development of the project, it has not deterred our efforts to work against challenges to move this initiative forward. Funding is in process, shovels are in the ground, and dignity is being restored. In the material that follows, you will see how each pilot city is moving ahead with establishing permanent supportive housing for previously chronically homeless families and individuals. This will certainly be a longterm project as we expand the pilot program to other cities in the US. We remain grateful for the prayers and support of so many individuals and organizations that partner with us in this mission-driven endeavor.

Sister Donna Markham OP, PhD

President & CEO, Catholic Charities USA

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Introduction

The Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) Healthy Housing Initiative (HHI) is a person-centered, comprehensive approach to address chronic homelessness (🏠 [HUD definition](#)) through the development of permanent supportive housing (PSH).

Officially launched by CCUSA in January 2020, HHI is one of CCUSA's eight strategic initiatives. With the approval and support of the local (arch) diocese, HHI is now active in five cities. The following Catholic Charities agencies are leading the development of PSH:

1. **Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan**
(CCSEM Detroit)
2. **Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada**
(CCSN Las Vegas)
3. **Catholic Charities of Oregon**
(CCO Portland)
4. **Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington**
(CCEW Spokane)
5. **Catholic Charities Archdiocese of St. Louis**
(CCSTL St. Louis)



Within each city, HHI has three goals:

- **Reduce chronic homelessness** in the five pilot cities by 20%;
[🏠 2019 PIT Sheet](#)
- **Decrease hospital readmission rate** for the population by 25%; and
- **Connect** 35% of those housed with primary and behavioral healthcare providers.



Ground Breaking for Cathedral Village - 110 New Affordable Apartments in North Portland, including PSH units for the Chronically Homeless.

To achieve these goals, the use of repurposed surplus church property (where feasible) to develop the PSH is encouraged. Also, an Integrated Health Model of Care is the hallmark of the initiative. Therefore, each PSH project will be developed to include space for onsite and accessible:

- **Health services** by local Catholic hospital system;
- **Behavioral health services** by local Catholic Charities agencies supported by other mission-aligned organizations;
- **Case management services** by local Catholic Charities agencies supported by other mission-aligned organizations; and
- **Property management services** communicating with case management.

Leaders within the participating Catholic Charities agencies and several CCUSA staff members invested significant time planning, preparing and laying the critical groundwork to launch the HHI pilot. Notably, CCUSA President & CEO Sister Donna Markham engaged and obtained support for HHI from the local (arch) diocese in each pilot city. She also presented and promoted HHI to executive leaders within Catholic hospitals and the Catholic Health Association. While other examples of pre-launch groundwork are mentioned in this report, this document predominantly captures the efforts and activities of the CCUSA HHI team and the five pilot city Catholic Charities agencies during the first official year - January 2020 to January 2021. This summary highlights the breadth, depth, progress, and complexities of this bold and exciting five-year strategic initiative.



CCUSA Healthy Housing Initiative Year One:

During this first year, efforts and assistance provided by CCUSA to help the HHI pilot agencies move forward have been quite robust. Assistance included help with identifying property sites; establishing relevant partnerships; securing resources; and advancing integrated health and other services for the chronically homeless.

a. The Healthy Housing Initiative (HHI) team

In fall 2019, CCUSA assembled the Healthy Housing Initiative team (HHI team). The HHI team leads the HHI efforts at the national office and provides ongoing and tailored support to the five HHI pilot city agencies. Using their expertise and the talent of key CCUSA staff, the team supports the pilot city agencies by:

- Providing technical assistance for housing development and health integration,
- Facilitating the establishment of strategic partnerships,
- Raising capital and other resources,
- Promoting projects via publications, and
- Hosting educational webinars.



CCUSA HHI Team



E. Lorraine Bell
Chief Officer, Population Health



Timothy Crawl-Bey
Senior Director, Housing Strategy



Curtis Johnson
Vice President, Affordable Housing Strategy



Katherine Komara
Consultant, Behavioral Health



Father Ragan Schriver
Special Assistant to President,
Strategic Initiatives



Benjamin Wortham
Vice President, Behavioral Health
Integration

In the months leading up to the official launch of the initiative, the HHI team visited all five pilot cities at least once. In December 2019, the HHI team conducted a pre-HHI kickoff presentation to CCUSA staff. This presentation highlighted the social determinants of health as the core work of local Catholic Charities agencies; described the HHI Health Integration Model of Care; and detailed the profiles and progress of each pilot city's effort. The presentation was well-received by CCUSA staff and generated interest in identifying ways to connect their programs to HHI.

b. HHI Official Launch

In January 2020, Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of CCUSA, introduced HHI at [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) - a National Press Club event in Washington, D.C. This served as the official launch of HHI, though the groundwork for the initiative started in 2018.

c. Building Relationships with Funders

Throughout 2020, CCUSA worked with HHI pilot city agencies to: identify resources; refer them to project professionals; and provide them with a list of local grantors. CCUSA also presented a \$50,000 grant to each pilot. CCUSA connected the pilots to Enterprise Community Partners encouraging them to submit Section 4 HUD Capacity Grant applications. This resulted in CCO Portland receiving \$50,000, and CCSEM Detroit receiving two grants for \$60,556 and \$30,000, respectively.

d. Providing Technical Assistance and Consultation

Before the official launch of HHI and throughout this first year, the HHI team held monthly meetings with the pilot city agencies and provided site-specific technical assistance and consultative support on a range of topics and processes.



HHI Pilot City Specific Technical Assistance and Consultation

Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (Detroit)

- Collaborated with Ascension Health's corporate office to support HHI on a local level, resulting in a growing partnership with Ascension St. Johns Hospital in Detroit
- Assisted with the interview process to identify an affordable housing consultant to support the project
- Connected the agency with other local affordable housing development partners, including the Detroit office of Enterprise Community Partners
- Supported the planning process for the agency to provide services in Wayne County
- Provided technical assistance analyzing and reviewing the Qualified Allocation Plan for LIHTC, and for drafting proposal for the City of Detroit RFP to acquire a site for PSH
- Assisted agency with identifying and analyzing surplus church property for PSH



St. Matthew's school - future location of PSH

Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada (Las Vegas)

- Supported the enhancement of the agency's relationship with Common Spirit Health
- Reviewed agency's MOUs with local development partners and provided recommendations regarding relevant business terms and responsibilities under this agreement
- Provided technical assistance analyzing and reviewing the Qualified Allocation Plan for LIHTC
- Helped facilitate relationships with local funders

Catholic Charities of Oregon (Portland)

- Provided support for interviewing a PSH developer
- Initiated a conversation with agency and local Catholic hospital about data collection to support HHI's goals
- Introduced agency to Enterprise Community Partners and provided technical assistance for a funding application, resulting in a \$50,000 award for the project

Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington (Spokane)

- Held meetings with agency to offer technical support on data tracking and collection of health outcome measures
- Provided a platform for agency to promote its many accomplishments as a successful PSH model within the Catholic Charities network
- Coordinated meeting in Spokane with other HHI pilot agencies to understand the HHI model



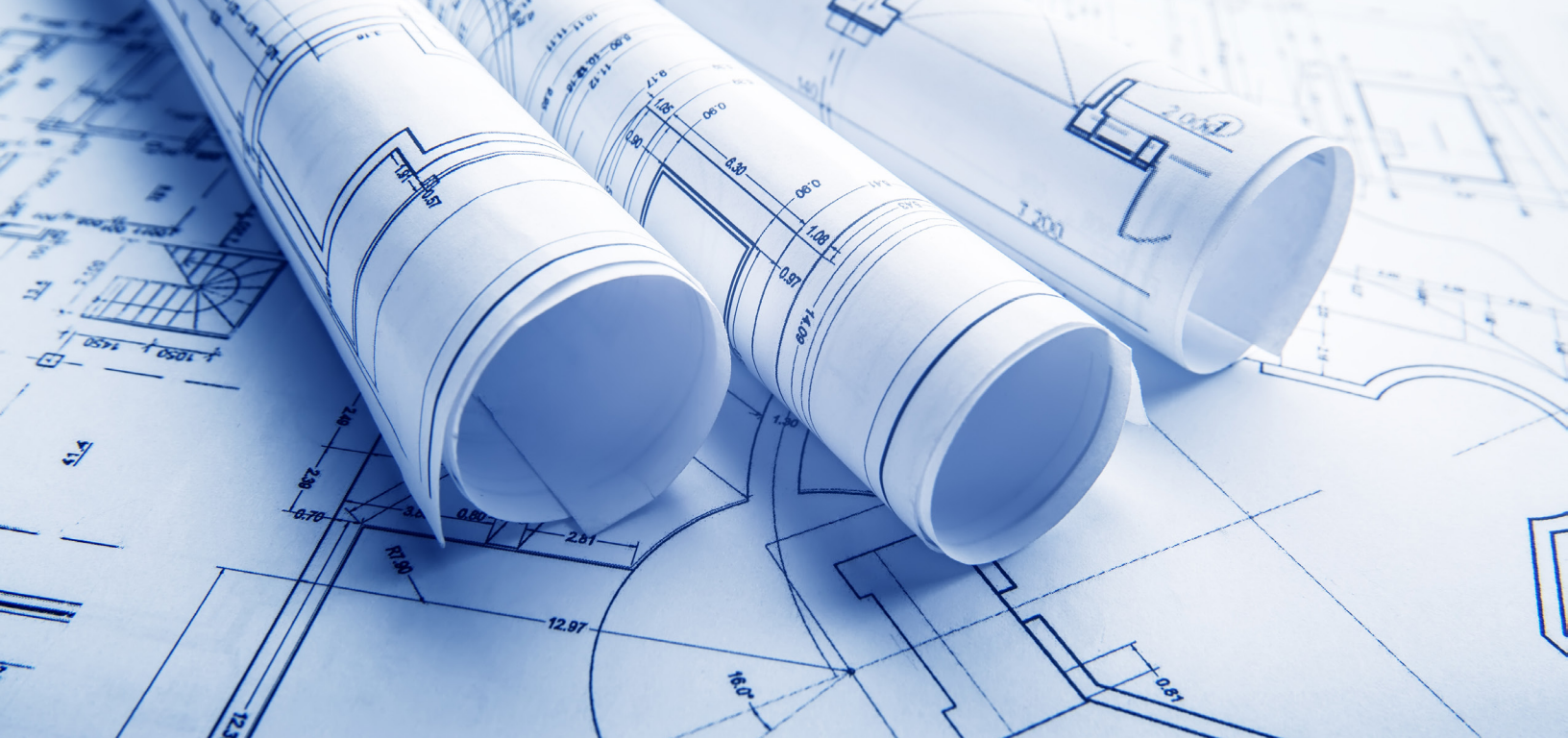
Gonzaga Haven Construction - 73 unit multifamily PSH

Catholic Charities of St. Louis

- Provided a training session on visioning and planning, which led to the development of the HHI working group
- Senior Director for Housing Strategy participates on agency's HHI working group
- Provided input on the use of local surplus church property sites to determine the viability of the property for the HHI effort
- Facilitated a call with the state housing finance agency to discuss LIHTC process and other state-funded options
- Introduced the agency to several affordable housing development partners
- Coordinated a meeting with the agency's federal congressional representative's office
- Provided a respite care presentation to the HHI working group to enhance the relationship with the local hospitals



St. Louis HHI meeting



In May 2020, the HHI team conducted an HHI pilot cities call for all five agencies to reflect on their progress, accomplishments and share cost-cutting information.

e. Promoting Integrated Health Model

Coordinated services through an Integrated Health Model of Care is regarded as a best practice for providing care to vulnerable populations with complex health and behavioral health needs. This evidence-based model is an essential component of the HHI PSH pilot.

The HHI Integrated Health Model includes HHI agencies partnering with local Catholic hospitals to provide health services to HHI PSH residents. In March 2020, the HHI team prepared and provided HHI briefing materials for the president & CEO of Ascension Health. This effort resulted in Ascension Health, specifically St. Johns Hospital in Detroit, enthusiastically engaging and collaborating with Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (CCSEM). Ascension St. Johns will provide health services to HHI PSH residents and at The Center for Works of Mercy - CCSEM's new community-based facility that provides food, medical care and supportive services to the homeless in the City of Detroit.

In the fall of 2020, members of the HHI team began monthly meetings with Catholic Health Association (CHA) senior leadership to explore opportunities for collaboration in support of integrated health across the Catholic Charities network.

The HHI team also promoted integrated health and affordable housing trainings and webinars for the Catholic Charities Network.

Summer/Fall 2020	Winter 2020-2021
CCUSA Affordable Housing Institute	Introduction to Telepsychiatry Services
Homeless Services in the CCUSA Network	Let's Talk about Men: Physical and Mental Health and Wellness
Creating and Sustaining a Respite Program	HIPAA Updates for Health and Behavioral Health Providers
Impact Investing and Social Enterprise	Introduction to Creating Impactful Partnerships - The Agency Perspective
Best Friends Animal Society: Managing and Living with Pets in Rental Housing	Introduction to Creating Impactful Partnerships - The Provider Perspective
Intersection of Housing & Parish Social Ministry: Lessons in Parish Partnerships	Introducing the USDA: Housing and Community Facility Programs for Rural America



During this first year, the HHI team offered Catholic Charities network behavioral health professionals and HHI pilot city agencies access to training modules to increase capacity for engagement with behavioral health clients and client systems.

January 2020 to January 2021 Behavioral Health Client Engagement Trainings

1. Introduction to Integrated Care
2. Trauma Informed Care
3. Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
4. Motivational Interviewing
5. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)
6. Introduction to Groups

f. Publishing HHI Newsletter

The HHI team developed and published two e-newsletters. The first HHI e-newsletter was published in [June 2020](#), and the second in [January 2021](#). Looking ahead in Year Two, ideas and approaches to distribute the e-newsletter more broadly are under discussion within the HHI team.

g. Monitoring and Evaluation

The HHI team and CCUSA's research department started to develop and implement tools, metrics and measures to support the data collection, monitoring and evaluation of HHI. During 2020, the group:

- Developed a [logic model](#) depicting the programmatic activities of HHI and the intended outcomes.
- Created an initial form for collecting health and behavioral health measures and information. CCEW-Spokane is currently working with Providence St. Joseph Hospital to capture data from these measures.
- Developed and promoted a Gold, Silver and Bronze standard for collecting data:

- o Gold: Hospitals and insurance plans provide health data on clients
- o Silver: Hospitals provide the agencies with “Read Only” access into their clients’ electronic medical records, or clients grant case management access to their patient health portal
- o Bronze: Self-reports to case manager on ER visits/ inpatient hospitalizations/ and Primary Care Provider (PCP) engagement.
- CCSTL obtained read-only access from Barnes Jewish Christian Hospital and is working with Mercy and Sisters of Saint Mary’s for read-only access into their electronic medical records.
- CCUSA Integrated Health team is working on defining a threshold of data and information to be collected from HHI agencies.
- Explored the possibility of using a grant management tool - Amplifund - as the program for CCUSA to collect data for HHI.

h. Exploring HHI Expansion

Several agencies in the Catholic Charities network are engaged in some aspect of housing and/or health services. In August 2020, the HHI team invited these agencies to a meeting to explore the concept of integrating housing, health and behavioral health services to best serve vulnerable populations. The meeting was well-attended and, between September and October, the HHI Team conducted 25 one-on-one feasibility consultations with agencies interested in HHI.





CCUSA HHI Pilot Agencies

Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (CCSEM Detroit)

Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada (CCSN Las Vegas)

Catholic Charities of Oregon (CCO Portland)

Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington (CCEW Spokane)

Catholic Charities Archdiocese of St. Louis (CCSTL St. Louis)



Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (Detroit)

Archbishop Allen Vigneron
Diocesan Director: Paul Propson

Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (CCSEM) had a productive first year. The agency engaged housing partners, garnered financial support, opened a community-based center to provide a plethora of services for the homeless, connected with relevant local nonprofits, developed a promising relationship with the local Catholic Hospital, and much more. 🏠 [Year One Highlights](#)

Year One Reflections

Having a stronger presence in Wayne County and building capacity around housing development has been an intentional effort for CCSEM. The CCSEM is building a credible and evolving presence in the community, which will lead to the success of the HHI project.

CCSEM has learned how to interact with the archdiocese and parishes regarding surplus church property by selecting and effectively working with affordable housing consultants and leveraging existing programs, relationships and services that mutually benefit HHI; operations that are important for any agency interested in developing PSH.

While COVID-19 has caused meetings to be canceled and community engagement to be difficult, it has increased a willingness for partnerships among community service providers.

St. Matthew's school - future location of PSH



Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada (Las Vegas)

Bishop George Leo Thomas, PhD

President & CEO: Deacon Tom Roberts

SVP and Chief Administrative Officer: Marcus Valerio

SVP and Chief Operating Officer: Steve Schmitt

During this first year, in addition to operating a medical respite program with the local Catholic hospital, Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada (CCSN) made strides towards building capacity and securing resources to support its HHI project. The agency partnered with community focused affordable housing development experts, and received a grant to support services that provide pathways to PSH for chronically homeless individuals.

[!\[\]\(17413706fd4997a1a4bdf85c6864eee1_img.jpg\) **Year One Highlights**](#)

Year One Reflections

COVID-19 delayed the progression of CCSN's HHI project. The pandemic forced the agency to focus on core programs and budget management, instead of new initiatives. Collaboration with a local developer, the local Housing Authority and other local agencies was impacted by the pandemic. Dignity Health was forced to focus medical efforts on COVID-19, significantly reducing client referrals to the medical respite program. Also, the Medication Assistance Treatment program was closed as the operator shifted focus to COVID-19.

For agencies considering participating in HHI, CCSN suggests that agencies determine whether housing vouchers are a necessity for a tax credit application. If so, then obtain in writing, if possible, a commitment from the local housing authority to provide project-based PSH vouchers. Also, site identification and controls are needed to submit a timely tax credit application, so plan with this in mind.



Catholic Charities of Oregon (Portland)

Archbishop Alexander K. Sample

President & CEO: Deacon Richard Birkel

Director of Community Development and Housing: Travis Phillips

Catholic Charities of Oregon (CCO) had several efforts to address chronic homelessness in the Portland area in operation before the January 2020 kickoff of HHI. Since the launch, CCO has accomplished much, including implementation of a clear plan and development pipeline for PSH. [🏠 Year One Highlights](#)

Year One Reflections

CCO's participation in HHI has generated lessons learned and shareable information for Catholic Charities agencies considering developing a project. First, it is important to identify ways to pay for ongoing supportive services. Advocacy for measures, like a local or state supportive housing tax, should be initiated and ongoing to meet the housing and service needs of people experiencing homelessness. Second, it is important to recognize that the availability of vouchers and rent subsidies may not fully solve the housing problem in every jurisdiction, highlighting the need to advocate for public funding and support. Third, agencies interested in HHI should pay close attention to their goals. This will ensure that HHI expansion activities advance those of the agency. Additionally, agencies considering participating in HHI should spend the time early in the process to ensure that everyone's expectations are realistic and aligned. Finally, community engagement strategies and racial equity analyses are critical for project success.

For CCO, ongoing data collection around hospital utilization data is important to assess impact of PSH as an intervention. CCO continues to work with Providence St. Johns Hospital System (PSJHS) to address this need.

In the Portland area, there are limited resources and a strong cohort of community development agencies competing for those resources. Although having competitive projects has allowed CCO to secure project resources thus far, future resource availability will be an ongoing challenge.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the progress of CCO's HHI project. It slowed local permit review and application processes. It also impacted the capacity of internal and partner teams to focus on HHI projects due to competing priorities focused on the pandemic (refers both to changing workplace impacts for all partners and responsiveness related to healthcare implications for PSJHS). Nevertheless, the pandemic enhanced conversations with stakeholders around the need to build more affordable housing and PSH.



A rendering of Cathedral Village



Catholic Charities Eastern Washington (Spokane)

Bishop Thomas Daly
President & CEO: Robert McCann

Catholic Charities Eastern Washington (CCEW) has a long history of providing PSH in Spokane, Wash., and is considered the model program for the HHI. With 522 units of housing in place for the chronically homeless to date, CCEW continues to expand its portfolio of projects and services to this population. [Year One Highlights](#)

Year One Reflections

CCEW has found that tracking outcome measures, especially getting utilization data from health care systems, is complex and critical. This data is needed to show the return on investment, cost-benefit of integrating health care with homeless populations and reducing utilization costs for healthcare while achieving more dignity and better outcomes for the homeless.

To encourage project success, it is critical to address nimbyism and those who oppose the “Housing First” philosophy and PSH in the local community. It is also important to have a strategy on how to develop supportive relationships with hospital and housing authorities. Additionally, building proactive relationships with local police, fire, ambulance, elected officials and the media must be early and intentional. Services and housing for the homeless continues to be a divisive issue in communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic created a seven-week delay for the start of construction on Gonzaga Haven. The lease-up of Schweitzer Haven was also delayed while the agency offered Providence hospital the space as emergency overflow facility. Providence did not end up needing the space, so Schweitzer Haven was opened and leased up to 100% within the first month of opening in spring 2020.

Top image: Gonzaga Haven rendering
Bottom image: Schweitzer Haven rendering





Catholic Charities of St. Louis

Archbishop Mitchell T. Rozanski

President, Catholic Charities St. Louis: Theresa Ruzicka

St. Patrick Center CEO: Anthony D'Agostino

Catholic Charities of St. Louis (CCSTL) is organized as a federation of nine separate 501(3)C entities, and the St. Patrick Center is the lead Catholic Charities entity developing and implementing the plan for the local HHI project. [🏠 Year One Highlights](#)

Year One Reflections

Identifying the most feasible property for HHI has been a challenge, and CCSTL explored many possibilities before determining a site for the first HHI project.

A great deal of time and effort in 2020 was spent on planning and engaging stakeholders and prospective partners. As a result, a HHI working group was formed, providing valuable input in developing and implementing a successful HHI effort. In addition, a pilot project was developed with SSM Health, St. Louis University Hospital. The Hospital-to-Housing pilot is designed to coordinate services outside the hospital and ensure patients experiencing homelessness are connected to housing services.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted financial contributions from various sources and forced area hospitals to shift their priorities. As other agencies look to participate in HHI, CCSTL recommends securing project funding early and listening to the needs of the local health system for optimal partnering and program success.

SSM Health/St. Louis University Hospital



Summary and Next Steps

It has been a challenging yet rewarding first year for HHI. Despite the difficulties presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, HHI is off to a good start. As we move into Year Two, the HHI team will continue to explore creative approaches to secure resources and elevate the success of the initiative.

We recall the story of Jesus walking to the town of Emmaus alongside his disciples after he had risen from the dead. At the outset of the journey, the disciples knew where they were going and were clear on the route to get there yet did not recognize their companion along the way. As the journey progressed, they heard encouraging words from the risen Lord and, as they reached their destination, it became apparent that it was Christ with them all along.

The journey of HHI for the chronically homeless began with a clear awareness of where we were headed as well as strategies to reach the destination. The process of HHI mirrors the walk to Emmaus with its clear goals and path with one major exception: We are clear who is walking beside us on this journey! Christ's Spirit has been clear in the minds and hearts of those engaged in planning this initiative, alive in those engaged in development, and obvious in the faces of those we serve.





Working to Reduce Poverty in America

The mission of Catholic Charities is to provide service to people in need, to advocate for justice in social structures, and to call the entire church and other people of good will to do the same.