

Spring/Summer 2019



FHO News

A newsletter for our friends and supporters

From the Director's Desk — Nancy Egner, Executive Director.

Over my three years with FHO, some of the things I have learned is that we must get our message out into the larger community and we need to ask for support in assisting us in doing our good work, so that we can expand our services and help more people. We are aware that many more people could use our services, in the Concord area and elsewhere. This newsletter and our Facebook account help, but there is more to do. Therefore, we are undertaking organizing a number of events and fundraisers over the next year to kick off this effort!

Our first event happened in May (pictured here). Heritage Harley Davidson kindly offers selected nonprofits the chance to host a community barbeque one Saturday over the summer at their site, with the aim of circulating information and collecting donations for cooking and offering their customers good eats. Thank you Heritage H-D!

In June, we will participate in NH Gives (June 11 – June 12), as well as Concord's Market Days Festival (June 20 – June 22). This will be our first time having a presence at Market Days and we hope you will come visit us at our booth! During the month of November, we will be hosting our first ever movie and panel discussion at Red River Theatres. The movie and discussion will be focused around mental health issues and housing needs. Also during November, we will be participating in the 2019 Giving Tuesday fundraising campaign. Looking further ahead, in May 2020, we are hoping to have a Walk-A-Thon to raise money and awareness, while offering an overall fun gathering with music, food, silent auctions and raffles. More information will be posted as we get closer to all of these events.

Proceeds from these fundraising activities will assist us with the needs we identify and seek to fill but unfortunately are currently beyond our budget. Such needs include:

- Assisting FHO to purchase a rental property so we may serve an additional 6-10 people.
- Updating and adding material to our website.
- Purchasing additional marketing tools and supplies, including 2-3 minute videos about FHO and our work.

We hope to see you at our upcoming events and appreciate all donations that help support the many services we offer!

Thank you all!



Good news we are proud of!!

As a provider of subsidized housing, our buildings are regularly inspected by various funding agents to ensure we are keeping them in good condition and providing quality housing to our tenants. We recently underwent a REAC Inspection of one of our properties. What is REAC, you might ask. From HUD's website, they report:

“The Real Estate Assessment Center's (REAC) mission is to provide and promote the effective use of accurate, timely and reliable information assessing the condition of HUD's portfolio; to provide information to help ensure safe, decent and affordable housing; and to restore the public trust by identifying fraud, abuse and waste of HUD resources.”

This important inspection involves a HUD contracted inspector coming to and looking at the property in detail. Is everything in working order? Is everything up to code? Well maintained? They score EVERY little thing. The best score possible is 100. I am very proud to report that we received a 99 on our latest inspection!! Congratulations to our property management team, and our Maintenance Coordinator in particular!! You do make us proud!!

Fellowship Housing Opportunities, Inc.

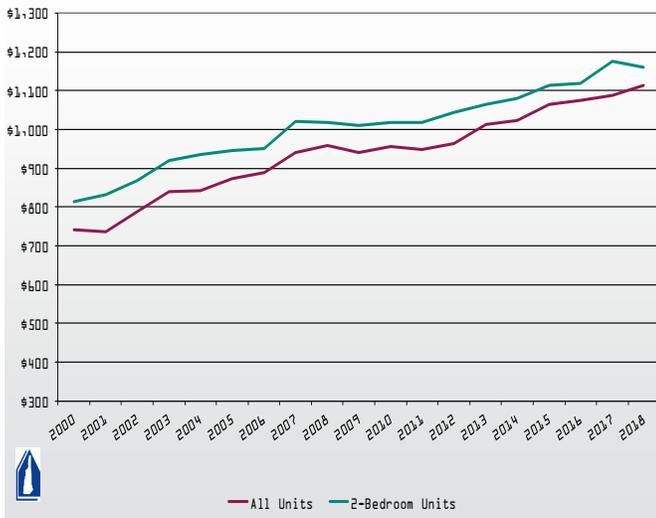
36 Pleasant Street, Concord NH 03301.

phone—603.225.1767 www.fellowshiphousing.org

Could you live on \$900 a month in Concord??

Many people ask me when I talk about Fellowship Housing (which I do often!), why is FHO necessary? The short answer is in the question above... because most of our folks are asked to live on about \$900 a month. It is VERY difficult without help these days in Concord, NH to provide yourself with housing, utilities and phone, food, clothing, and all the other essentials of life on \$900 a month. Remember... the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Concord is about \$1030.00 a month as listed in the latest housing statistics put out by New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority for 2018. How can someone rent an apartment for \$1000 a month, when they only earn \$900? It does not work. So if Fellowship Housing and others can offer someone a decent place to live for less money than the going rate, perhaps as low as one third of their income, that is a HUGE improvement in their lives.

Median Gross Rental Cost for Merrimack County, 2018



Some people then go on to ask, 'why only \$900 a month? My relative is on disability for a bad back (for example), and they get more than that.' Please let me offer my take on this.

Our tenants are seriously mentally ill. That means they have been diagnosed with schizophrenia or bipolar illness or some other serious

and lifelong mental illness. Due to genetics and various reasons, these illnesses usually manifest themselves when people are in their late adolescence or early adulthood - just when people are starting to go out into the world and go on to further schooling or start a career or job, etc. Thus, if someone is afflicted with a mental illness - which often means (especially during the early years of the illness) multiple hospitalizations, periods of instability and experiencing acute symptoms - they are not likely to have a good work history allowing them to earn a living and pay social security taxes! When it comes time to apply for disability payments, the mentally ill often have not paid much - if anything - into social security. The relative mentioned above with the bad back may have had a 20, 30 or 40-year history of making a living and paying social security taxes prior to their disability determination. The person with more paid in will usually receive more out. The person who has not been able to pay in will get less paid out. Thus, our folks on average get about \$900 a month. So, I ask again, could you live on \$900.00 a month in the Concord area in 2019?

Nancy Egnor, LICSW, Executive Director of FHO

Graph from the from the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority
March 2019 newsletter



Pay It Forward

Thanks to generous donations from two foundations, FHO was blessed with a new Nissan Pathfinder last year. Since receiving the new vehicle, FHO decided to donate our older, yet still very operable, 2002 Toyota Sienna to someone else who needed it more

than we did. In May 2019, we donated the van to Marianne Smith, who is currently receiving support from the Friends Program here in Concord. We wish her all the best!

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