



Care for the Homeless

Spring Bulletin 2010

Interview with James F. Woods

Care for the Homeless is celebrating its 25th anniversary of serving New York's homeless children, women and men in 2010



Jim Woods recently retired from the CFH Board of Directors after serving for 23 years; he was our longest serving board member. He has served on the Board as Treasurer, Secretary, Vice President, and President. Jim serves as the Chief Administrative Officer at Heritage Health and Housing, a community-based organization.

Jim talks about his 23 years of service with CFH:
 I began working with Susan Neibacher (founder and first Executive Director of CFH) in April 1987, when I was Director of the Charles Gay Shelter (run by the Volunteers of America). Susan was with the United Hospital Fund and they had just received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Pew Memorial Trust to establish health care for homeless people. There was a requirement that people from other organizations be involved. Barbara Knecht (another

CFH board member) came on-board a couple of years later. The Comic Relief telethon raised money for the homeless relief effort. We all wanted to help people get off the streets. In 1992, CFH became independent from the United Hospital Fund.

What has sustained CFH over the years with all its challenges?

The founder of any agency who stays on for an extended time will set a high standard for CFH. This agency has lasted as long as it has and as long as it will because Susan knew the governmental system. She knew the movers and shakers; she was always candid with them. She was often persistent with them. Bobby Watts (CFH Executive Director) learned under Susan. He knows those people and has always been candid with them. The government funders knew that they could trust the word of the CEO of CFH. That has been a big plus in helping the agency grow as much as it has.

How have you seen homelessness change in the city?

Back in '87, I ran a shelter for older homeless men. Many of the older folks at Charles Gay had an alcohol problem. In the first year, the average age of the residents dropped from upper-fifties to mid-forties, and the younger people were involved in crack. It became a



Jim Woods has served on CFH's Board of Directors for 23 years

more violent shelter, and more difficult to manage. Over time (from the mid-90's and beyond) we saw the number of homeless people drop down, and we saw improvements in the system - more low-income and supportive housing was built. Shelters became more than warehouses; they began providing social services. Now, because of the economy, we are seeing a lot more homeless people in the streets and subways again.

These days, there are more outreach programs, services are better, and shelters are better. CFH is doing what needs to be done. CFH helps people get linked-up with Medicaid and see doctors

Interview continued inside on page 2

In this newsletter
Care for the Homeless' 2010 Annual Appeal



Photo: Patrick J. Carroll

Left: Yomaris, age 8, takes a pause from playing at the CFH 'Mommy and Me' Saturday workshop

Have you moved recently? Changed your email address? Please email your new contact info to: info@cfhnyc.org to ensure you receive the latest updates on our accomplishments, services and policy work, volunteer opportunities, events, e-vites and newsletters!

SAVE THE DATE

This year **Care for the Homeless celebrates its 25th Anniversary** as a homeless health care provider in New York City. To help mark this important occasion, Care for the Homeless will host a **Policy Summit** on Thursday, May 13th from 8:45 am to 11:30 am at:

**The William and Anita Newman
 Conference Center
 Baruch College
 151 East 25th Street,
 Room #750**

The event will feature speakers and presentations that will discuss issues that affect the health care needs of the vulnerable population we serve. The summit is sponsored by the Manhattan Borough President's Office.

More information on this free event will be available soon on our website: www.careforthehomeless.org

Jim Woods Interview, Continued

without regard to their ability to pay.

After 23 Years, what are you most proud of?

When it was first being considered, a few others and I felt that CFH should not be involved in providing housing or shelter services. In the end, after Board discussions and a vote in favor, it became a matter of everyone working for the agency's goal to provide shelter services. This led to *Susan's Place*, named after Susan L. Neibacher. It took an enormous amount of planning and community involvement to open *Susan's Place*. So when *Susan's Place* finally opened and then our Article 28 clinic opened, it was fantastic. CFH became a true provider of health care, rather than facilitating it through others. It gave us the ability to fill in gaps. I'm a big believer in filling gaps. These are some of the things that I'm proud of.

What's been our impact on homelessness?

We've become a recognized authority on homelessness because of Bobby Watts' and Doug Berman's (Director of Policy) efforts. We've also become better known in the homeless community because of the Development Department's efforts. That's something you don't see in a lot of homeless agencies. Our impact on homelessness has been small and immediate: support, health referrals, and health care for 10,000 people per year. When you take a look at the entire system with over 39,000 homeless people at any given moment, I think that the effect has been within our niche.

Susan's Place Residents are Counted in the 2010 Census

Susan's Place participated very closely with the U.S. Census Bureau to ensure that all residents of *Susan's Place* were counted in the decennial census. By doing so, we helped to ensure millions of dollars in funding will be available to the local community, NYC and NYS for needed community services.

Dental Services Begin at CFH

Marisella Garau, DDS, began treating patients on February 5th at CFH's sparkling new dental clinic located at *Susan's Place*. Dental Services are available to residents at *Susan's Place* and to homeless adults referred to the dental clinic from other shelter sites. Dr. Garau is providing these services for CFH in partnership with Brooklyn Hospital. Grants from the Gladys Brooks Foundation, The Hyde and Watson Foundation, and the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation helped to outfit the clinic.



Leslie Moody, CFH Health Educator at work at *Classic Re-Runs* at *Susan's Place*

CFH on the Move

Last December, members of the CFH senior management team attended a two-day symposium organized by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), our federal funder. The event was an effort to coordinate and strengthen the efforts of all relevant NYC health care agencies toward addressing the health of homeless people.

Debbian Fletcher-Blake, CFH Senior Director of Clinical Programs and Clinical Administrator, was selected to moderate a panel on behavioral health issues for homeless people at the Institute of Children in Poverty's annual conference in Philadelphia this past January.

Bobby Watts, CFH Executive Director, and Natalie Richardson, Director of *Susan's Place*, hosted a group of undergraduate students from the International Honors Program on January 24, 2010. The student group, led by long-time CFH board member Barbara Knecht, is studying urban affairs both domestically and abroad.

On February 1, 2010, CFH Consumer Board Members, David Broxton and Elnora Waring traveled to Albany for Health Care for the Homeless Advocacy Day. The duo was led by Doug Berman, CFH Director of Policy and Mike Gilhooly, CFH Program Coordinator.

Doug Berman organized the first ever Homeless Services United Advocacy Day in Albany with Christy Parque, Executive Director of Homeless Services United on February 26th. Debbian Fletcher-Blake and Patrick Carroll, CFH Senior Social Worker, were among the health care providers that were part of the advocacy team.

CFH Implements Program Evaluation

Last fall, with financial support from the United Hospital Fund and the Ira W. DeCamp Foundation, CFH achieved a long-held ambition to bring program evaluation to the agency. We expect that being able to document the positive impact of our programs will result in increased programmatic quality, as well as financial and social support from the community. Judith Samuels, PhD was recruited to serve as the Director of Program Evaluation. Dr. Samuels comes to CFH with many years of experience in research and program evaluation of programs, services and interventions for homeless populations. CFH also hired an experienced Program Evaluator, Sonali Mishra, MPH. Ms. Mishra has spearheaded the effort to convert resident records at *Susan's Place* to a computerized record and data system, AWARDS from Foothold Technology.

AWARDS "went live" on Monday March 8, at *Susan's Place*. The software is being used by the entire social service staff to document services provided and to manage the services delivered to *Susan's Place* clients. The program evaluation team will analyze the data entered and collected. Program evaluation efforts have begun at *Susan's Place*, and our goal is to eventually bring program evaluation to other parts of the agency.

Stay tuned to:
www.careforthehomeless.org
to find out how you can buy tickets and sponsorships for our
25th Anniversary Gala Event

Care for the Homeless welcomes our newest foundation supporters:
The Dammann Fund, Gladys Brooks Foundation, Helen Hoffritz Charitable Trust,
New Yankee Stadium Community Benefit Fund,
Larry and Jane Scheinfeld Foundation and Women of the ELCA