



# Annual Report

*Fresh Start:  
A home where women can grow*

## Sick and tired

Marian (name has been changed) was very ill. She had diabetes and other chronic conditions and was struggling to get them under control. She also struggled financially, and she couldn't work due to her health. Her personal relationship was on the rocks- full of anger, and confusion as to why things had changed from the good relationship that had existed. Marian left the relationship but then found herself homeless. She came to Fresh Start sick and uncertain how to get better. She was tired all of the time, and it was hard to know what steps to take to address her multiple medical needs and the other barriers that she faced. She came to Fresh Start doubtful that things would change, but wanting to try.

*"Without you I would have been lost. I think about (Fresh Start) all the time. I am amazed at myself now."*

*- Former Fresh Start resident*

While at Fresh Start, Marian worked with staff and identified small steps to take towards her goals. She saw a doctor, began monitoring her meals, and did other things to improve her health. She maintained contact with her spouse, and they gradually rebuilt the relationship.

Marian is quick to tell people how much better she is now. She still struggles with her health; that will be a life long issue. For her, it's not just the health conditions, it's her outlook on life. Marian visited one day, a few months after she completed her program. She told staff "Things are better. There are good days and bad days but I'm doing okay. I will continue the journey God has put me on and I love it." Marian is quick to tell others that they too can change things, and Fresh Start will help. She also was overhead saying this to a current resident "You're very, very lucky to be here and I hope you realize that."

## What's cooking?

Fresh Start continues to be thankful for all of the individuals and groups that give their time, talent and treasure to us. In 2014, Fresh Start offered a new opportunity to aid our mission- Sunday night suppers. Groups were invited to provide supper for residents on a Sunday night, and learn about Fresh Start while here. It's an opportunity for fellowship and to learn about Fresh Start and homelessness through a one time service project. A grant from the Lincoln Rotary Club #14 allowed Fresh Start to offer grocery gift cards to groups that otherwise may struggle with the cost of providing the meal.

*"It is so nice that these people care about us. And supper was so good!"*

*-Fresh Start resident*

The response was wonderful! Meals initially were provided by church groups; soon calls came from others. In 2014, individuals from First Free Church, First Lutheran, New Covenant Community Church, St. Mark's Methodist, Unitarian Universalist, United Lutheran, United Methodist, and Woodmen of the World Youth Group. For 2015, Fresh Start expanded this opportunity. Groups may now provide supper on any Sunday night. Contact Monica at 402-475-7777 if you'd like to be involved.

**2014  
Board of Directors**

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SitStay.com

**Cynthia Peterson,**

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First Data Corporation

**Jane Wood- Bennett**

Vice-President  
Gallup

**Elizabeth Wood**

Treasurer  
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**Kristin Carlson**

Labenz & Associates, LLC

**Alex Cowsky**

NeighborWorks

**Katie Cunningham**

Dana Cole & Company LLC

**Ann Kontor**

State of Nebraska

**Sarah Kramer**

Nationwide Insurance

**Nicholas Ludwig**

Union Bank & Trust

**Message from the President**

Cynthia Peterson, 2014 President of the Board of Directors



“Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle,” a quote attributed to both Plato and a late 19<sup>th</sup> C. Scottish theologian, certainly resonated when I came across it many months ago. Homelessness, for those experiencing it and others working to end it, is indeed such a battle. Fresh Start has been a safe haven and a place for transformation for almost 25 years.

The Fresh Start team – staff, Board of Directors and volunteers – are remarkable, passionate, caring and talented women and men. As you can imagine, working at a homeless shelter is not easy. Staff come to work every day – certainly because of the paycheck – but moreover because they are proud of Fresh Start’s purpose, and their desire to help our residents achieve self-sufficiency.

Volunteers, bless them all, have countless places where they can give of their time and talents – and they choose Fresh Start! The Daisy Store – an all-volunteer operation – is testament to the impact volunteers have at Fresh Start. Many others, as individuals or as part of a group, have brought in Sunday suppers for the residents, taught a class, helped at an event, done yard work, and much more.

Board members are very generous with their time and energy. Engaged and involved, these individuals care about Fresh Start’s mission, financial health and on-going success. New members have joined the team, adeptly filling the hard-to-fill shoes of members who moved on to other challenges. The Fresh Start Board of Directors continues strong and forward focused, and I am proud to serve as President.

The Fresh Start team couldn’t do what we do without donors and funders. Fresh Start sheltered and supported 86 women in 2014. Paying the bills, keeping up with maintenance and putting money aside for the future absorbs much of the Board’s time and attention.

On a disappointing note, a huge three-year continuation grant awarded in 2012 by a federal agency continues to be wrapped in miles of red-tape. Thankfully, we came through 2014 in better financial shape than projected. Dollar-stretching by the Finance Committee and Executive Director reached a new high. The large and unexpected gift from a local service club certainly made a difference; and Project

Funway, Fresh Start’s annual clothing design show and fundraiser, exceeded all expectations, setting the benchmark for 2015.

Fresh Start, with your support, will continue to provide services to women in 2015 as they battle homelessness and strive for self-reliance. No matter the size or shape of your gift, be assured Fresh Start will be its good and faithful steward.

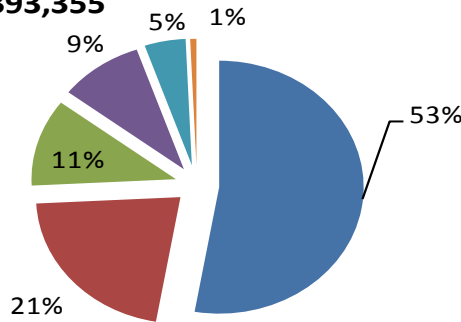
*“I support Fresh Start because I have been blessed with people who believe in me and support me. These women don’t often have that. They need someone who they can see working for them, and who can help them realize they are good people with a lot of value. They can work hard to change their own lives, and Fresh Start helps them see — and do - that .”*

*Board member Elizabeth Wood*

2014 Revenue and Expenses

Revenue \$393,355

- Grants and Contracts
- Financial Donations
- Events
- The Daisy
- Program Fees
- Miscellaneous

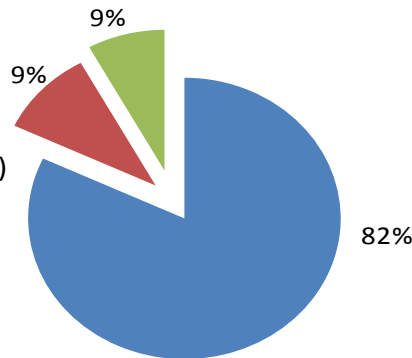


In-kind services were received from Pioneer Printing, St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center, Soluna Video, and Thomas, Kunc & Black, with a value of \$11,150.

Some grant funds for 2014 expenses will be received in 2015 and are not reflected in the 2014 income.

Expenses \$417,274

- Program Expenses
- Program Management & Admin
- Fundraising Expenses (incl. The Daisy)



Depreciation is \$ 36,010 of the total expenses. Expenses less depreciation are \$381,264.

Grants and Contracts

The following organizations provided grants or contracts to Fresh Start during 2014:

- ◆ Emergency Food & Shelter Program
- ◆ Joint Budget Committee (Lincoln & Lancaster County)
- ◆ Junior League of Lincoln
- ◆ Lancaster County Community Corrections
- ◆ Lincoln Community Foundation
- ◆ Lincoln Housing Authority
- ◆ Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program
- ◆ Rotary Club #14
- ◆ United Way of Lincoln & Lancaster County
- ◆ U.S. Department of Justice: Office on Violence Against Women: Transitional Housing Assistance Program
- ◆ Woods Charitable Trust

*“(Staff) helped me thru the tough times without my kids. Great program.”*  
Former Fresh Start resident

2014 Statistics

- 89** Residential stays
  - 86** women received shelter services (unduplicated count)
  - 38years** - Average age of residential clients
  - 14 years** - Average education level attained
  - 58%** of the residents were mothers
  - 9%** self reported as Hispanic
  - 12%** self reported as African American
  - 11%** self reported as Native American
  - 68 %** reported substance addiction
  - 66%** reported history of domestic violence
  - 58%** reported mental health conditions
  - 11%** received disability
  - 7,308** nights of lodging
  - 29,726** meals available
  - 1,086** case management meetings
  - 466** instances of clothing or personal care items
  - 1,879** offerings of workshops or recovery meetings
  - 8** women participated in community support
- “Fresh Start was a blessing for me.”*  
-Fresh Start resident



*A home where women can grow*

6433 Havelock Ave  
Lincoln, NE 68507  
402-475-7777  
www.FreshStartHome.org

**Return Service Requested**

Fresh Start is proud to partner with the



Nonprofit org

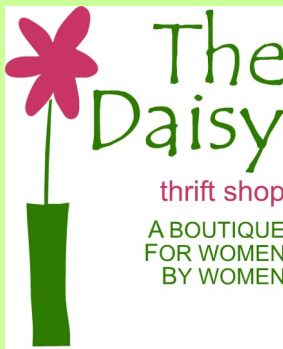
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*High on  
Quality,  
Low on  
Price*

The Daisy offers high quality women's clothing, accessories and home décor. Proceeds from The Daisy benefit Fresh Start.

The Daisy is open:  
Fridays & Saturdays  
10AM – 4PM

Third Thursday of the month  
4-7PM

Clothing donations received are first made available to residents of Fresh Start. Donations are accepted Mondays & Thursdays, 10AM–1PM, and by appointment.

### **The Fresh Start program**

Fresh Start is a transitional shelter and goals program. Women may live at Fresh Start for up to one year while they work to make positive changes in their lives. During this time all basic needs are provided, along with advocacy, case management, and support. Case managers assist residents with the goals they set and with accessing resources needed to reach these goals. Staff is on-site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to offer help and guidance. Community support services are offered to women who complete their residential stay and who would like ongoing support. The home visits, food pantries and telephone support are geared towards helping each woman maintain her self-sufficiency and are available for up to two years.

### **Helping hands**

In 2014, volunteers provided approximately 3,800 hours of service to Fresh Start. Activities ranged from running The Daisy to organizing events to internships to projects in the shelter...and more! IndependentSector.org states an hour of volunteer service in Nebraska, in 2014, was worth \$20.62, signifying a value of \$78,356 for the time donated. To Fresh Start, the time given is priceless. If your church, business or organization is interested in supporting Fresh Start, please call 402-475-7777.

**Find more information about Fresh Start, The Daisy, and upcoming events at [www.FreshStartHome.org](http://www.FreshStartHome.org), on the Fresh Start Lincoln**