



Annual Report

*Fresh Start:
A home where women can grow*

Maybe I'll Stay

"90 days?! I'm not staying 90 days! I can't believe my P.O. (probation officer) is making me do this; I don't need it." That's what Brianna (name has been changed) said when she moved into Fresh Start after her P.O. said she had to live in a program for at least 90 days before getting her own apartment. She didn't want to be in the program, didn't need it, and didn't need or want to talk with staff about her goals or challenges.

"Maybe I'll stay a little longer." That's what she said during her third month at Fresh Start, after settling in and slowly starting to talk more with staff. It was hard for her to open up, and even more difficult for her to ask for help. To her, asking for help meant she failed and she was determined to succeed on her own. Brianna is a motivated person, a go-getter. She found employment quickly, and focused on what she needed to do to get back on her feet. The longer she was at Fresh Start, the more at ease she became. Living with so many other people was never easy for her, but she made it work, and she made friends. She also kept a count: "I've been her 103 days now. I've been here 240 days now." It became a running joke, and also a source of pride. Other sources of pride were the promotion she was given at work, and her sobriety. She was also in a healthy relationship.

"People should be grateful for this place."

-Former resident

After 270 days, not 90, Brianna completed her program. She moved into her own apartment, and continues to work at the same place, but now as a manager. She still doesn't like to ask for help, but knows it's fine to reach out to others once in awhile. Congratulations, Brianna, on all of your success!

Dedication

Dedication. It's a word that aptly describes long-time Fresh Start volunteer Donna Bolz. She's been involved with Fresh Start for over ten years, and has served Fresh Start in many ways. She is always willing to help, whether it's as President of the Board of Directors in 2012, or as an advocate for the homelessness at her church. She has been a part of building The Daisy, Fresh Start's thrift clothing boutique, and continues to volunteer with the shop. She comes most Mondays to sort donations, and says "I go on Monday mornings to start my week in perspective, to start off by helping somebody else."

When asked why she supports Fresh Start, Donna said she believes in supporting causes where you address basic needs, because if someone doesn't have food or a home they are going to have hard time getting anywhere else



Donna Bolz

with their goals. She believes it's important to support small organizations that don't have as many staff or resources. Donna encourages others to get involved, and says she get just as much out of her time at Fresh Start as the residents. She considers it a blessing to be involved.

Donna is one of the many people that believe in Fresh Start's mission to end homelessness in our community. Thank you, Donna, for your commitment to Fresh Start and to the women we serve!

"Fresh Start does such good work that people don't hear about."

-Donna Bolz

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Message from the President

Cynthia Peterson, 2015 President of the Board of Directors



On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, an enthusiastic thanks to Fresh Start's volunteers, donors, and supporters. You all provided us the much-needed time, expertise, encouragement, supplies, and monies to operate Fresh Start 24/7/365. The diminutive but impressive Daisy Thrift Shop – managed and staffed solely by volunteers, selling high quality donated items only twelve hours a week – was responsible for 9% of Fresh Start's revenue in 2015. Overall, volunteers provided at least 4,443 hours of service to Fresh Start, valued at \$91,615 [though 'incalculable' comes to mind]. No wonder Nebraska ranked seventh nationally in 2014 for volunteerism by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

"It is an honor to serve our community for an agency that clearly impacts and changes lives!"

-Denise Robeson, Board member

The Board is especially grateful for Fresh Start's dedicated and hard-working staff. Our staff continues to deliver exceptional advocacy and assistance to the women we serve as they strive for self-sufficiency. While small in number, our staff is mighty in their determination to help homeless women successfully move forward.

It's been an honor and pleasure to serve as President of the Board for two consecutive terms. Board members contribute a lot of time, thought and action beyond monthly meetings, which speaks to the strengths of their individual commitments. Together, we made great strides in our strategic planning and look forward to embracing that in 2016 and beyond.

Fresh Start's Board of Directors and staff stand together to empower homeless women to better their lives. Fresh Start is a difference-maker. Thank you for standing beside us.

New Service Offered in 2015

Thanks to a grant from the Department of Justice, Fresh Start is currently offering a new service for women that are homeless due to imminently fleeing domestic violence or sexual assault. Originally awarded for the transitional shelter program, changes in how the statute was being applied, coupled with an emphasis on community housing, resulted in an opportunity to pilot a new service.

The award is through the Dept. of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women's Transitional Housing Program and is for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or dating violence. Since each participant has to be imminently fleeing to qualify, women must be referred by Voices of Hope or Friendship Home. Assistance is available for housing-related needs, as well as for transportation, utilities or other needs. Specialized services for needs related to the violence are offered by Voices of Hope, with whom Fresh Start has a

Memorandum of Understanding for this project. This is a temporary service that will end in 2017. The grant also includes funding for staff development, specifically to trainings offered by the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

"My boyfriend was nice at first but he hit, pushed, and beat me. I found emergency shelter and from there I was referred and accepted into this program. I am living (in my own place) now and grateful."

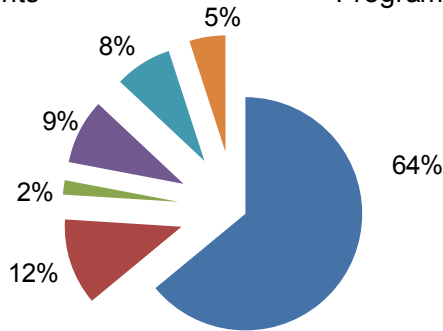
-Participant in the DOJ funded program

2015 Statistics

Revenue and Expenses

Revenue

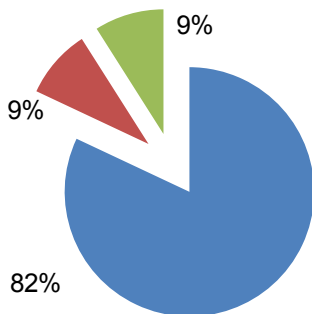
- Grants and Contracts
- In-Kind Services
- Events
- Financial Donations
- The Daisy
- Program Fees



In-kind services were received from: J&R Repairs, Pioneer Printing, St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center, and Thomas, Kunc & Black. The total value was \$7,762.

Expenses

- Program Expenses
- Program Management and Administration
- Fundraising Expenses (incl. The Daisy)



"I learned a lot. Thanks for helping me become more assertive and for making me feel like I can do anything I set my mind to doing."

-Fresh Start resident

Depreciation is \$36,002 of the total expenses. Expenses less depreciation were \$403,811.

Grants and Contracts

The following organizations provided grants or contracts to Fresh Start during 2015:

- ◆ Building Strong Families Fund
- ◆ Community Health Endowment
- ◆ Cooper Foundation
- ◆ Emergency Food & Shelter Program
- ◆ Joint Budget Committee of Lincoln & Lancaster County
- ◆ Lancaster County Community Corrections
- ◆ Lincoln Community Foundation
- ◆ Lincoln Housing Authority
- ◆ Nebraska Homeless Assistance/ City of Lincoln Urban Development
- ◆ Peter Kiewit Foundation
- ◆ United Way of Lincoln & Lancaster County
- ◆ U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women Transitional Housing Assistance Program

"I don't think my transition would have gone so well without Fresh Start."

-Fresh Start resident

80 Residential stays

79 women received shelter services (unduplicated count)

37 years - Average age of residential clients

12 years - Average education level attained

58% of the residents were mothers

1% self-reported as Hispanic

14% self-reported as African American

9% self-reported as Native American

74 % reported substance addiction

63% reported history of domestic violence

56% reported mental health conditions

18% received disability

7,483 nights of lodging

22,449 meals available

918 case management meetings

573 instances of clothing or personal care items

1,420 offerings of workshops or recovery meetings

8 women participated in community support

9 women participated in community housing (2 housed, 7 other services)



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

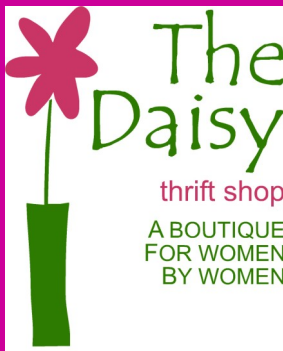
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US Postage

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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 goals program for women who are homeless and without children in their custody. A hybrid of a community shelter and a transitional program, Fresh Start offers a stay of up to one year, in a communal living setting. Women may be homeless for any reason, and typically are addressing multiple challenges such as substance abuse, physical and mental health conditions, domestic violence, and employment. While at Fresh Start, a caring team of staff assist them with their efforts to make positive changes in their lives. During this time, all basic needs are provided, along with advocacy, case management, and support. Staff is onsite 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 2015, volunteers provided approximately 4,443 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 2015, was worth \$20.62, signifying a value of \$91,615 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 visit www.FreshStartHome.org, the Fresh Start Lincoln Facebook page, or call us at 402-475-7777.