

COMMUNITY REPORT 2020



HOMES FOR THE BRAVE
Applied Behavioral
Rehabilitation Institute, Inc.

(203) 338-0669



[HomesForTheBrave.org](https://www.HomesForTheBrave.org)



655 Park Ave., Bridgeport, CT 06604

Applied Behavioral Rehabilitation Institute, Inc. (ABRI)

Doing business as Homes for the Brave, we are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency based in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Our staff works with each individual we serve to help find safe and affordable housing, secure income through employment and/or benefits, and make meaningful contributions to the community. To date, we have served over 1,400 individuals.

OUR MISSION

With an emphasis on Veterans, we provide the housing and services necessary to help homeless individuals return to a productive and meaningful life.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to provide a model to enable homeless men, women and their families, especially those who have served our country, to attain safe, affordable housing, meaningful life activity, and a livable income so that they may return to a productive and meaningful life.

OUR VALUES

We believe:

1. It is essential to serve others with honesty, integrity, empathy, and patience;
2. Every individual deserves to be treated with respect and dignity;
3. By providing a non-judgmental environment and access to a comprehensive array of services, we demonstrate our commitment to putting those we serve first;
4. Hard work and responsibility lead to independence; and
5. Innovation is essential to developing creative solutions that are responsive to the evolving needs of our residents.

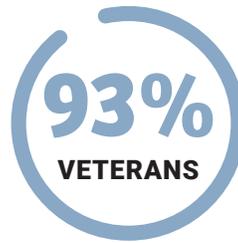
OUR MANTRA

Homes for the Brave exists to serve Veterans. We are innovative in determining and addressing their needs. We stand with them, delivering housing, mental health, and employment services to prepare them to live independently.

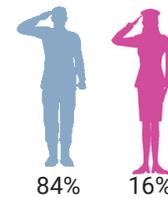
THOSE WE SERVE

Total Number Served: 181 (includes children)

Out of the 177 adults served this year, 133 were discharged and 44 remained in the three housing programs beyond June 30, 2020.



GENDER



SERVING MEN & WOMEN WITH COMPLEX NEEDS

72%

RESIDENTS WITH
SUBSTANCE USE
DISORDERS

78%

RESIDENTS WITH
MENTAL ILLNESS

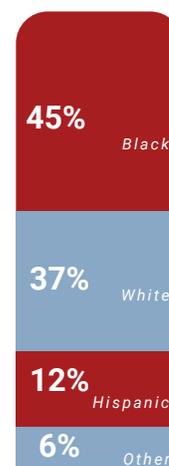
34%

RESIDENTS WITH
CHRONIC MEDICAL
CONDITIONS

AGES



RACE/ ETHNICITY



TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

109 DAYS

AVG. LENGTH OF STAY - MEN

143 DAYS

AVG. LENGTH OF STAY - WOMEN

IN ONE YEAR WE PROVIDED...

17,106

NIGHTS
OF SAFE
SHELTER



MEALS
SERVED

17,120



HOURS
LIFE SKILLS
COACHING

520



HOURS
COMPUTER
EDUCATION

350



86%
RESIDENTS PLACED
IN EMPLOYMENT

THANK YOU

Dear Friends,

Fiscal year 2020 has easily been the most difficult year of our existence. One that had significant highs and lows.

As last year progressed, we generated outstanding results in our Vocational Program, with 86% of our eligible male and female Veterans landing jobs. We became a subcontractor of The WorkPlace for the State of Connecticut Department of Labor's Military to Machinist program, which prepares Veterans struggling with long-term unemployment for rewarding careers in advanced manufacturing. Our services enabled 72 residents to transition into permanent housing. Our Homes for the Brave Veterans Service Center continued to grow, and we began hosting a weekly AA meeting.

In March, COVID-19 gripped our nation. The pandemic presented a monumental challenge to the way we run our organization. Our focus became squarely on keeping our residents and staff safe. While heavily occupied, we did anything and everything we could do to promote social distancing. We adjusted our routines to serve meals and conduct weekly house meetings in shifts. We removed half of the stations from our computer lab. External visitors, meals, and workshops were halted. Our expenses for food, cleaning supplies, staffing, and PPE skyrocketed.

We could not be prouder of our residents and staff for how they responded. We thank our outstanding Board of Directors and our remarkable donors for giving us the guidance and support to keep providing world-class service for the Veterans we care for 24/7/365. We are grateful to you, our donors, because without your support, preparing our residents for clean, safe and affordable permanent housing, and for becoming positive forces in their communities would not be possible.

We hope you find this Community Report informative and ask that you continue supporting the work we do in fulfilling our mission to serve those who have served our country and now find themselves in need.

Very Truly Yours,



Robert Kozlowsky
Chairman, Board of Directors



Vincent Santilli
Chief Executive Officer



Back Row: Dr. Marcia Hunt
Middle Row: Kaitlin Genovese, Col. Adele Hodges (Marine Corps. Veteran)
Front Row: Bob Kozlowsky (Chairperson), Randy Abrams (Army Veteran), Paul Mayer (Secretary, Air Force Veteran)

Not Pictured: Bernadette Baldino, Vinny Bartoli, James Cannon (Treasurer, Navy Veteran), Michael Dolan, Matthew Frankel, Ernest Johnson III (Army Veteran), Dee Troth Lippman (Army Veteran), Phillip Modesti (Marine Corps Veteran), Rose Ogrinc (Immediate Past Chair), Eric Parker, Juliet Taylor (Army Veteran), Johnny Vazzano (Vice Chairperson), James Boland (Marine Corps Veteran, Emeritus Board Member), Tony Cinquanta (Army Veteran, Emeritus Board Member)



Homes for the Brave (HFTB) provides 42 beds of transitional living for Veterans and non-veteran men experiencing homelessness, with 37 spaces designated for Veterans. It is the largest program of its kind in Connecticut.



Waldorf House provides permanent supportive housing with case management services for 9 Veterans and non-Veterans who are formerly homeless and are now independent. Residents pay 27% of their gross income for rent, including utilities.



Female Soldiers: Forgotten Heroes (FS:FH) at the PFC Nicholas A. Madaras Home provides transitional housing for up to 14 female Veterans experiencing homelessness and their young children. It is Connecticut's first and only program exclusively for this population.



Individuals receive help with immediate basic needs, including life skills and computer training at our walk-in, drop-in **Veterans Service Center**. Meetings with federal legislative staffers and therapy dog visits are also provided.



Our **Training for Success Vocational & Educational Program** offers employment services. Staff work one-on-one with clients on resume writing, job searches, and interview preparation. We connect Veterans with available educational benefits and help them with job training.



Many of the Veterans we serve are ineligible for VA clinical services. Some find it difficult to travel to the medical campuses in West Haven or Newington. We launched the **Homes for the Brave Clinical Program** to address the gaps in services for Veterans with mental health and substance use disorders.

THANKS TO YOU, OUR CLIENTS ARE

ATTAINING EMPLOYMENT

A new vocational opportunity will become available to our Veterans this upcoming year. In 2020, we partnered with The WorkPlace on the Military to Machinist program. This new program aims to assist Veterans in Connecticut with the skills they need to obtain in-demand jobs in advanced manufacturing and related positions. This new component adds to our current Vocational Program, connecting Veterans to educational benefits and to job training.

GAINING INDEPENDENCE

Homes for the Brave was awarded a generous \$181,679 two-year grant from the Federal Department of Veteran Affairs for follow-up case management services. This allowed us to hire Clinical Case Manager Kristine Brown, who works with Veterans leaving housing programs and those who need support to maintain permanent housing. Through these services, clients are better equipped to return to a life of full independence.

STAYING SAFE AMID COVID-19

COVID-19 forced us to take unprecedented measures to keep our clients safe and help stop the spread of this deadly disease. Weekend dinner service was added and multiple sittings were scheduled for meals and house meetings. We worked quickly to move Veterans into safe, stable housing to make more space available in our programs. New residents quarantined upon arrival. Social distancing, masks and hand sanitizer help us maintain a safe environment.



In this past year, clients have increased their average income by 34% and have experienced a 118% increase in their employment.



We bid a fond farewell to long-time Case Manager Georgianna Bradley. Over the years her work at Homes for the Brave has helped countless clients get the help they needed to build their paths to success.

ANSWERING THEIR CALL: OUR VETERANS' STORIES

AARON'S STORY

It is hard to imagine that in America there are Veterans experiencing homelessness, but it is a daily occurrence and for a variety of reasons. Meet "Aaron," an energetic and proud Marine Corps Veteran, who was a resident at Homes for the Brave.

After four years of service while traveling the world, and an honorable discharge from the Marine Corps, Aaron started his own welding company, specializing in the cruise industry. Unfortunately, a series of poor choices led to him becoming incarcerated.

Upon release he had a choice: return to his home state of Florida, or make a fresh start. Knowing he was his own best advocate, Aaron connected with the West Haven VA when he arrived in Connecticut, and there he learned about Homes for the Brave.

"There's a solution to every problem, and Homes for the Brave provided me with the tools and individual support that I needed for my particular situation."

While at HFTB, Aaron worked with his case manager to develop a plan to get back on track. He took advantage of all the services Homes for the Brave offers. He attended life skills workshops and completed the computer class. He worked closely with vocational staff to perfect multiple resumes and his interviewing skills. In time, HFTB helped Aaron find housing in an apartment where he can garden. His son later moved in with him. Today he is working toward rebuilding his welding company.

"I needed someone to believe in me – someone to meet me where I was and help me through my specific challenges. I'm forever grateful for that support."



KAYLA'S STORY

"I didn't want to be there," remembers "Kayla" as she talks about her first day at FS:FH. "I was scared and alone. I couldn't believe anyone understood what I was going through."

Kayla grew up in New Jersey in a military family. Her father, her sister, and she all enlisted in the Army. As the first female to work in the Pentagon's dental lab, Kayla characterized herself as independent and self-sufficient. Upon her discharge, Kayla went on to have a long and successful career at the VA hospital in Washington DC until she retired in 2018.

She looked forward to traveling, but unexpected medical bills left her reeling. Quickly, Kayla found herself in a difficult economic situation and about to face eviction. She needed a fresh start. Without a car, she took a Greyhound bus north where her mother and sister lived. "I just remember looking down at my key chain and not having any keys for the first time in my life."

Still in shock and overwhelmed at how her life had turned upside down, Kayla prepared herself for life in what she thought would be a typical homeless shelter. Instead, she arrived at FS:FH and found a beautiful facility and a robust program. She saw the genuine affection and personal touch the staff had with her fellow residents.

As she became more comfortable, Kayla began to open up about her struggles with depression and began embracing her new community of fellow Veterans. She participated in traditions like cookie decorating with her housemates and started painting, nurturing her creative side and reducing stress.

Kayla now lives independently in a complex with other female Veterans and is making new friends. She credits FS:FH for reminding her how much people care about her and for showing her a community that is always there for her. "It was overwhelming at first," she admits, "but even talking about FS:FH now brings a bright big smile to my face."



REVENUE FY20

Federal Grants	\$798,684
State Grants	\$247,721
Special Events	\$270,301
(less direct costs)	(\$83,609)
Contributions & Small Grants	\$597,213
Client Fees	\$67,399
Other Income	\$14,899
In-Kind Revenue	\$261,625
Total Revenue	\$2,174,233

EXPENSES FY20

Programs & Services	\$1,683,376
Management & General	\$274,900
Fundraising Expenses	\$249,411
Total Expenses	\$2,207,687

ASSETS

Total Assets	\$4,166,029
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Note: Approval of the fiscal year 2020 financial data was pending an official vote by the Board of Directors at the time of printing.

OUR GENEROUS DONORS

In Fiscal Year 2020

11%
RAISED THIS
YEAR OVER LAST

\$480

AVERAGE
CONTRIBUTION

449

NEW INDIVIDUAL
DONORS PROVIDED
AN ADDITIONAL
\$142,330

1,923

NUMBER OF
IN-KIND DONORS

136

NEW ORGANIZATION
DONORS CONTRIBUTED
AN ADDITIONAL
\$144,658

4,301

NUMBER OF
IN-KIND DONATIONS

\$63,316

TOTAL TRIBUTE
DONATIONS

WE THANK OUR ANNUAL EVENT SPONSORS

PLATINUM SPONSOR



GOLD SPONSORS



SILVER SPONSORS



WE THANK OUR VETERANS SERVICE CENTER SPONSORS

GENERAL SPONSOR



CAPTAIN SPONSOR



SERGEANT SPONSORS



As public funding resources continue to decline, we are grateful to our supporters.
We could not help homeless individuals, especially Veterans, get back on their feet without your help.

THANK YOU

THANK YOU FOR CREATING NEW BEGINNINGS

Thanks to **YOU**, we are making concrete progress on ending Veteran homelessness in our area. You are changing lives. We are deeply grateful for your extraordinary support and fundraiser participation throughout the year. We hope to see you at our upcoming events! For a full list, visit [HomesForTheBrave.org/Events](https://www.HomesForTheBrave.org/Events).

OUR ANNUAL EVENTS

- Bingo for the Brave - Aug 2019 & Jan 2020
- 5th Annual Step Up for the Brave
- Service Center Open House (New!)
- 4th Annual Mini Golf Tournament
- 4th Annual Comedy Night



COMMUNITY EVENTS TO SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

- 4th Annual Car Cruise at Raymour & Flanigan
- Home Run for Heroes by Sikorsky: A Lockheed Martin Company
- Helping from Heaven
- Port 5 Wiener Fest
- Toast to Katie
- Columbus Day Street Fest
- Veteran's Day 3 Miler by AT&T
- One Club Tournament by the Fairfield Rotary Club
- Tee Shirt Campaign by the Fireosity Foundation
- Battle of the Badges Virtual Golf Tournament by Golf Lounge 18
- Veteran Plunge by American Legion Post 196



SAVE THE DATE

Bingo for the Brave
Early 2021 and Summer 2021

5th Annual Comedy Night
March 2021

17th Annual Golf Classic
May 2021

7th Annual Step OUT for the Brave
September 2021



2020 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Mark Hirschbeck is our 2020 Volunteer of the Year. Mark has been coming to HFTB each month since 2017, providing free haircuts to our male residents. He creates the barbershop feeling in our laundry room each time he comes, with music and great conversation. His tagline is 'Changing Lives One Cut at a Time.' One truly sees the power of a haircut and the boost of confidence it can give to a person each time he visits. In June 2020, he opened his barbershop Hirschey Cuts in Shelton, Connecticut.

Right now there's a Veteran struggling with homelessness and **YOU** can help them.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

For your convenience, donations may be made online. Check with your employer about matching gifts.

HomesForTheBrave.org/AnnualReport

LEGACY GIVING

Including ABRI in your estate plans changes the lives of Veterans experiencing homelessness today and in the future.

HomesForTheBrave.org/Donate

DONATE GOODS

We are often in need of a wide range of goods, including food, new clothing, new bedding, and more.

HomesForTheBrave.org/WishList

VOLUNTEER

Prepare and serve meals, host a supply drive, share your expertise, or become an ambassador. There are no limits to the ways your time and talents can help.

HomesForTheBrave.org/Volunteer

DONATE A VEHICLE

Donating your vehicle to ABRI is free, easy, and may earn you a tax deduction.

HomesForTheBrave.org/CARS

HIRE A VET

We can connect you with a prospective employee who has a proven capacity to excel: the American Veteran.

HomesForTheBrave.org/HireAVet



We acknowledge **YOUR** generosity. Over the last fiscal year, July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, you supported housing and meals, mental health and human services, vocational and life skills training. Thank you for creating positive change in our community. You continue to help our residents gain the foundation they need to achieve their goals, beginning their life transforming journey. To see a full list of donors, please visit HomesforTheBrave.org/AnnualReport.