Welcome to the Coalition Connection spring newsletter. The staff and clients at the Coalition will be happy when the warmer months arrive. Winter is a matter of life and death for thousands of homeless men, women and children. Being homeless anytime is tough, but being homeless in the winter is even tougher.

Many people have their own opinions of why homelessness exists. Most people do not want to be homeless. The fact is, many homeless people work. A growing shortage of affordable housing, less secure jobs with fewer benefits are just some of the issues attributed to homelessness. Every month we are helping individuals and families with children find permanent housing. During 2014, homelessness ended for 299 individuals and families, rental and housing prevention assistance was given to 14 families with children and 168 individuals are no longer jobless in D.C.

Mayor Muriel E. Bowser announced on February 12, 2015, that her administration will hire four housing navigators also known as locators who will be given the responsibility of finding quality affordable housing across the city that could be used for homeless families who currently rely on emergency shelters. This is certainly a step in the right direction. We will keep you posted on the progress of the Mayor’s “new lease” on life special initiative.

The Coalition is happy to report that we hosted a successful 6th Annual Jobs, Training and Education Opportunity Fair on Thursday, September 25, 2014 at the ARC Boys and Girls Club in southwest Washington, DC. We partnered with employers to recruit people for jobs in a variety of service industries and apprenticeship training. Onsite interviews were offered, assistance with online job applications, interviewing techniques and tips to create or revise their resume.

The Coalition and many others are doing our best to continue to provide services and strategies to eliminate homelessness. There are many moving parts to our active efforts to help people do more than survive, but to help them thrive. I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter. For more information on our programs and services, please visit our website at www.dccfh.org.

Message from Executive Director
Michael L. Ferrell

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Our Impact
Snapshot Success Stories
Homelessness Does Not Mean Hopelessness

Ms. Neffie Keitazulu is currently at Valley Place Family Apartments with her six year old daughter Ariana. She recently graduated with a Bachelor’s Degree in Criminal Justice Administration from Westwood College. Ms. Keitazulu is considering a career as a Police Officer or a military career where she would like to be commissioned as an officer. Despite her challenges she is determined to remain positive and optimistic. She is very grateful to the staff at Valley Place for helping her become self-sufficient.

Curtis Burwell was homeless and unemployed. In April 2012, he took steps to change his life and was accepted into the Blair Transitional Rehabilitation Program. In July 2012, he enrolled in a 10-week Certified Home Health Aide Training Program at Opportunities Industrial Center (OIC). After graduating from the program, he was hired as a Nursing Aide by KBC Nursing Agency. Mr. Burwell moved to the Coalition’s Sherman Avenue Single Room Occupancy in November 2014.

In August 2013, Mr. Darrell King needed help from the Emery Work Bed Program. He was employed but was not making enough money to afford his own apartment for him and his wife. Unfortunately, the move to Emery resulted in him having to be separated from his wife. He says prior to his arrival he was living from one place to another. Mr. King admits that his life is much better now than it was a year ago. He is in his own apartment and most importantly reunited with his wife and granddaughter.

WE HAVE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING VACANCIES FOR HOMELESS MEN – PASS THE WORD

Are you a homeless adult male 18 years and older who needs transitional housing and supportive services (i.e., counseling, case management, job readiness & life skills training, employment and housing placement assistance) to get back on your feet? The Coalition for the Homeless has vacancies at three of our transitional housing programs. You must be a District of Columbia resident and willing to participate in structured programs. Call today for additional eligibility requirements!

Blair Transitional Rehabilitation Program
635 I Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002
Contact: Maxine Young, Program Director
Office: 202-727-2832/33

Emery Work Bed Program
1725 Lincoln Road, NE
Washington, DC 20002
Contact: Xavier Parker, Program Director
Office: 202-635-1041

La Casa Transitional Rehabilitation Program
1131 Spring Road, NW
Washington, DC 20010
Contact: Gabrielle McCraney, Program Director
Office: 202-882-1237

Attn: to participate in this program, you must be employed at least 20 hours per week or enrolled in a training program.
We had a great time at the 2nd annual Stepping out for the Homeless fundraising dance on November 7, 2014 at St. Francis Hall in Washington, D.C. Line dancing is thriving all over the world and it keeps people on the floor. Chairman of the Board of Directors Geoffrey Lewis and his wife Lisa were up and dancing and having a great time. Mrs. Izeta Ferrell helped keep us all moving and has never backed down from a line dance yet! We grossed over $68,000 for the Emergency Housing Assistance Program to help prevent families with children from becoming homeless and help others who are already homeless to move out of shelter into permanent housing.

The evening was thoroughly enjoyable and the outpouring of both financial and moral support was particularly meaningful. Thank you to our sponsors: Connors Foundation, Share Fund, Wells Fargo, Trade Center Management Associates, Capitol Document Solutions, Discount Tree Services, Inc., and Coalition for the Homeless Board of Directors. Also, thank you to vendors, individuals who registered, and those who could not attend but made donations. Thanks to My Office Products for their support in purchasing tickets and printing some of our event materials.

Bravo to members of the Development Committee and Chairman Richard Appleton and board members for helping to provide guidance in making this event successful. Thank you to the Coalition staff who are engaged in our fundraising efforts. A special thank you to volunteers; Brenda Delaney, Pat Lumpkin, Sheree Pressley, Pamela Bean, who traveled from Rhode Island and Llewellyn Phyllis who traveled from New Orleans.

The Coalition for the Homeless operates a Life Skills program taught by skilled life coaches at the DC General Family Shelter in Washington, DC. The program began December 1, 2014. The Life lessons groups help adults in learning new information and the significance of developing and following through with a life plan. Lessons are selected from participants input and in areas that have shown needed enhancement. Some of the topics that were addressed included Building Self Esteem, Money Matters, Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution, How are we talking to Our Children, How to be a good neighbor and Healthy Relationships.

Life Skills welcomes our first community group; the brothers of the John F. Cook Masonic Lodge who will kick off a new endeavor entitled “For Men Only” as their effort to reach out though dialogue and motivation in the areas of personal, professional, and career development. This lesson is scheduled for the months of March, April and June 2015. We are in search of dynamic and interested persons, groups and organizations to join us. If you are interested in sharing your “skills for life” at the shelter, please contact Omega Butler, Director of Life Skills Initiative at 202-547-5706 x207.
about the coalition for the homeless

Our mission is to help transition homeless at risk individuals and families to self-sufficiency through housing programs and supportive services. We fulfill our mission by operating and managing 12 programs including the Virginia Williams Resource Center (VWFRC), the central intake office for all families in the District of Columbia.

Mark Your Calendar!

3rd Annual STEPPING OUT FOR THE HOMELESS™ Dance
Friday, November 6, 2015

St. Francis Hall
1340 Quincy Street, NE | Washington, DC 20017

For more information please visit www.dccfh.org

If you are interested in helping the Coalition with our fundraising efforts for the Stepping out for the Homeless dance, please call Sheila Baker, Development Manager at 202-347-8870; ext. 1314.