



Winter 2018

## HOUSING THE HOMELESS

by Nancy Schneeloch, Regional Director



Robin Foy

The Bridgeway PATH team (Program Assisting to Transition the Homeless) aka Homeless Outreach began in Union County in 1989, working with individuals who are both homeless and diagnosed with a mental illness, to link them to support services, and ultimately permanent housing. Bridgeway believes that individuals need a safe, secure place to call home in order to start their recovery journey. The PATH team outreaches on the streets at train stations, food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and social service agencies to engage with homeless individuals, many of whom come to the program with only the clothes on their back. The PATH team links individuals to welfare and social security, clothing and basic needs, shelters, mental health, medical, and substance abuse services.



Rakeem Booker

Last year in a grant process along with partner agencies, more than 80 rental assistance vouchers became available for individuals who are chronically homeless and have a disability, to place them into permanent housing. Bridgeway's Union County PATH staff, Rakeem Booker and Robin Foy, took the lead with these vouchers and worked tirelessly to place individuals in their own homes. Both Rakeem and Robin are often found working very early, late at night, or on weekends to provide support to homeless individuals in the community. In order to meet the criteria of chronically homeless, an individual must be homeless for over a year, or four times in the past three years. Most individuals who are part of the program have been living on the streets, in places that no one would want to call home. The staff assisted the individuals throughout the process including completing housing applications, housing searches throughout Union County, identifying money for security deposits, and locating furniture and household supplies. To date the Union team has placed 60 previously homeless individuals in their own homes. Many achieve life goals, including going back to school or work, once they have permanent housing.

To contact Homeless Outreach services in Union County, please call George Vessels, PATH Senior counselor at 908-289-7330. To contact Homeless Outreach in Sussex County, please call Patricia Packard, team leader at 973-383-8670. For Homeless Outreach services in Warren County and Hunterdon County. Please contact Fred Olmsted, Senior Team Leader at 908-894-5311.

Bridgeway's Valentines Dance featuring live music by GoodWorks was a blast! You can ensure that you will get notices about all Bridgeway events - send an email to [feedback@bridgewayrehab.org](mailto:feedback@bridgewayrehab.org). Just type "events" in the subject line. We would also love to hear what types of events you would like Bridgeway to host. We value your feedback!



## BE PART OF BRIDGEWAY'S LEGACY

You are invited to congratulate Bridgeway on the 50th Anniversary by publishing a message in our Tribute Journal. The Tribute Journal will be published in time for the 50th Anniversary Chairman's Dinner on May 2, 2018.

There is no cost to have your thoughts printed in the Tribute Journal. You are not required to use your full name. Your first name is enough to print a message. Please keep messages to 20 words or less. Send your congratulatory tribute message to [feedback@bridgewayrehab.org](mailto:feedback@bridgewayrehab.org). Please include your mailing address if you would like to receive Bridgeway's 50th Anniversary Newsletter by mail.



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

by Jessica Alevras

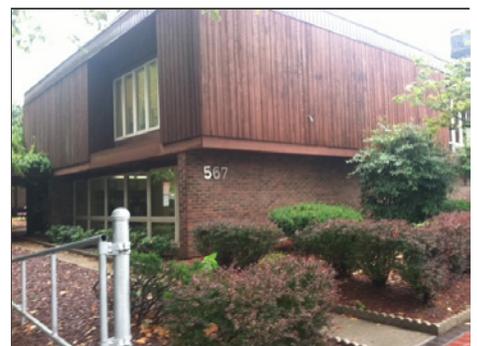


Each year the Quality Improvement Department distributes surveys to families to garner information as to the satisfaction of Bridgeway services for their family members. A twelve-question survey was sent out. The highest scoring question was, “how much involvement did you want to have in your family member’s recovery process.” We attribute this to the many mechanisms we have placed within Bridgeway to engage family members to participate in persons’ served recovery process, whether it be inviting them to the different functions at Bridgeway, the automatic prompts within the documentation to ensure that persons served are being asked if they want family members included as part of the recovery planning process, as well as other prompts embedded in other documentation, to name a few. The lowest scoring question was, “did you receive information about the Family Support Group.” Since this question only applied to family members whose loved ones attended Union Partial Care in Elizabeth, we theorized that family members from other programs were giving this question a low score.

It is the agency’s belief that family involvement is vital to recovery; therefore, within each survey we provided the family an opportunity to give their contact information so that a member of the Quality Improvement team can reach out to explore their concerns, hopes, and aspirations for their loved ones. Moreover, the data provided is analyzed and sent back to the teams for the development of an action plan to further improve our services provided to families and individuals. We hope that by this process, we are able to strengthen the collaboration, trust, and commitment that we seek to provide not only to persons served, but their family as well.

## SWEET HOME MORRIS AVENUE

When I think about the time that Bridgeway’s Union County Partial Care program recently spent as nomads in Elizabeth, relocating temporarily from one “home” to several “shelters”, some song lyrics come to mind - ‘you don’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone’ and ‘what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger’! When the furnace broke as the temperatures dipped into the teens, and we found out that it would be several weeks before there would be heat at 567 Morris Ave., we knew our capacity for ‘grace



under fire’ was about to be tested. I am happy to report that we came through ‘with flying colors’! We got by with a little help from our friends, namely, Ebenezer Church, our administration co-workers who gave up their offices, and the intrepid IT guys. Special thanks to all the direct care staff and leadership, who are living proof that ‘You can’t always get what you want, but if you try sometimes you get what you need’. by Lisa Giannascoli



**Join our online community!**

# DESIGNED BY HELISE!

Helise first shared her story with us two years ago when we were asking persons served by Bridgeway to share their experiences on video. Helise was so compelling that we featured her in our music video *A Bridge to a New Life*, which you can see by clicking on the YouTube icon on Bridgeway's website [www.bridgewayrehab.org](http://www.bridgewayrehab.org). Helise is a fabulous advertisement for the impact of the Sussex Partial Care program. Her recovery journey is so full of joy these days. She has channeled her energies into creating original jewelry designs and selling them at arts fairs. The last time I was visiting the Sussex Community Support Team in Newton, I saw her collection of original crystal earrings with my own eyes. Gorgeous! by Lisa Giannascoli



Helise at Partial Care

## CONTEST #1



Send a selfie wearing the 50th Anniversary tee shirt in any location *except* Bridgeway to [feedback@bridgewayrehab.org](mailto:feedback@bridgewayrehab.org) to be in a raffle for \$100 VISA Gift Card. Deadline 3/15

## CONTEST #2



This ABC sitcom about a woman on a recovery journey is named in this newsletter. Send the name to [feedback@bridgewayrehab.org](mailto:feedback@bridgewayrehab.org) to be in a raffle for \$100 VISA Gift Card. Deadline 3/15



Left to Right: CEO Cory Storch, Artist Ramon Castro, and CFO Biren Parikh, pose in front of Ramon's newest work. Ramon's art was so appreciated by Cory that he commissioned Ramon to paint a mural at Bridgeway's Partial Care Living Room at 657 Morris Ave., Elizabeth.

## SPECIAL 50th ANNIVERSARY EVENTS



**Wednesday, May 2, 2018  
KEAN University STEM Bldg  
Union, NJ**



**Monday, June 4, 2018  
Echo Lake Country Club  
Westfield, NJ**

**Please visit [www.bridgewayrehab.org/Events](http://www.bridgewayrehab.org/Events) for details**



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