



ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2021 July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

Mission: Provide a path to self-sufficiency to prevent and end homelessness through affordable housing solutions and advocacy in Howard County, Maryland.

Vision: Champion the eradication of homelessness.

Year in Review: The Best and Worst of Times

Thinking back over our past fiscal year, I am reminded of “A Tale of Two Cities” by Charles Dickens:

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times ... it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair...

The pandemic has been the worst of times for a majority of the clients we serve. Many clients were laid off in the first days of the pandemic, and others suffered deep cuts to hours and pay. Numerous other clients – who otherwise could have remained employed – were forced to leave their jobs and stay home with children when schools and daycare facilities closed. Some have not regained their jobs.

And yet, in the worst of times, our community and our nation have stepped up to the challenge. Volunteers and in-kind donors have kept our phones ringing with offers to help. Funders have provided critical additional support. And governments at every level have instituted eviction moratoria and provided emergency housing vouchers and rental assistance.

During the crisis, Bridges has not only kept the lights on, but the lights are glowing more brightly than ever.

During FY21, we expanded our Rapid Rehousing staff to help more people get off the streets or out of motels and into safe, permanent housing. We also added staff to process a heavy volume of eviction-prevention cases. And with a focus on health and safety, we remodeled our office and retooled our team to work remotely so we could continue to provide safe, comprehensive services to clients.



Our Impact in FY21

- 🏠 Served 746 individuals in 300 households
- 🏠 Helped 143 households remain in stable housing
- 🏠 Prevented 55 evictions
- 🏠 Rehoused 52 households
- 🏠 Provided 45 affordable rental units
- 🏠 Gave \$958,850 in housing stability assistance to low-income households
- 🏠 Provided 595 supplemental assistance items (food, household essentials, school supplies)
- 🏠 Delivered over 11,300 hours of housing-related case management

96% of clients remain stably housed after 12 months!

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of our mission. And we are extremely proud of the efforts made by our staff members, Board, donors, funders, and community at large to work together to lessen the impacts of the pandemic on vulnerable households.

We achieved much over the past year and recognize we have much left to do. We are excited to make an even greater impact in Howard County in the year ahead.

With gratitude for all of your support,

Jennifer Broderick LCSW
Executive Director



Bridges to Housing Stability, Inc.

We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

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www.Bridges2hs.org



Major Funders in FY21

Howard County Department of Housing and Community Development

Howard County Department of Community Resources and Services



The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation



Howard County Department of Finance



After 3 Years Living in a Car, a Stable Home



“My success wouldn’t have been possible without a roof over my head. I cry some nights about everything that I’ve wanted to do for so long, and how long it was put off while I was sleeping in my car. I’m so motivated now because I have stability.”

Carmen

Thank You, Volunteers & In-Kind Donors!

Over the past year, 78 volunteers donated their time, passion, and resources to support the Bridges mission. As a result, we were able to provide hundreds of households with supplemental resources:

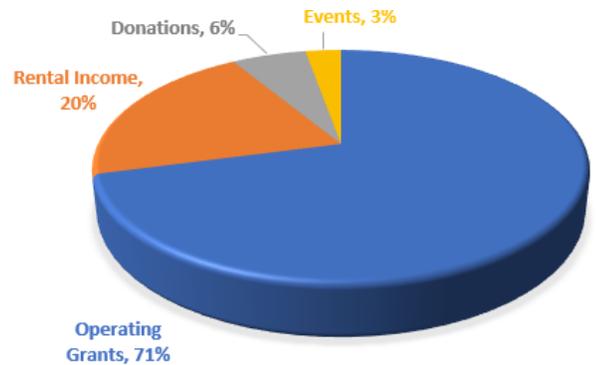
- Food boxes 175
- Gift cards 129
- School supplies 85
- Holiday baskets 75
- Thanksgiving baskets 69
- Welcome Home baskets 62



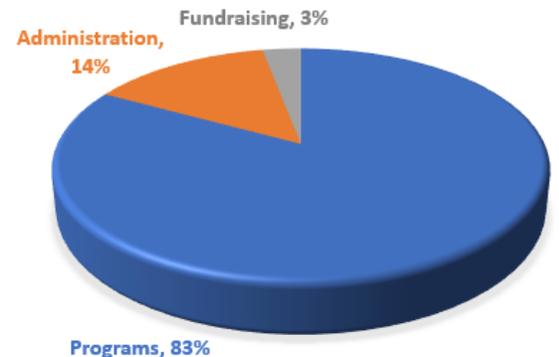
Financial Results for FY21

Income *		
Operating Grants		1,980,562
Rental Income		572,187
Donations		163,842
Events		77,989
Interest Income		3,729
Total		2,798,309
Expenses		
Programs		2,182,169
Administration		369,100
Fundraising		78,599
Total		2,629,868
Assets at End of Year		5,518,844
* Note: Bridges also received \$443,991 in acquisition grants, which were used to purchase affordable rental units.		

Income



Expenses



In Focus: Rapid Rehousing Services are a Permanent Housing Solution

As a result of the pandemic, our Rapid Rehousing program grew from 15 to 45 households during the past fiscal year. Our housing advocates worked with other service providers from the Coalition to End Homelessness on two successful programs to move households from homelessness to stable housing.

The goal with our Rapid Rehousing services is to move a client into housing within 30-45 days. The work involves extensive case management with the client and supplemental rental assistance payments for 12 to 18 months if needed.

Rapid Rehousing provides a permanent housing solution for about the same or less cost than shelter.

Rapid Rehousing is grounded in the “Housing First” model, which experts increasingly view as an effective solution to homelessness. The model assumes that people experiencing homelessness need necessities like food and a stable home before they can fully focus on other tasks such as getting jobs, budgeting money, and attending to their mental health. Studies have shown that the Housing First approach helps people exit homelessness quickly and remain housed for the long term.

At Bridges, 85% of families transition from Rapid Rehousing programs to stable, permanent housing without additional subsidies.

Bridges’ Rapid Rehousing team spends significant time providing case management to each client, to identify vulnerabilities, set goals, and find housing.



Rapid Rehousing services are provided by our Housing Stability Team. In recognition of its success, the team received the 2020 Audrey Robbins Humanitarian Award from the Association of Community Services.

A Stable Home is a Foundation for Success



“Without Bridges, I wouldn’t have been able to restart school. I wouldn’t have gotten the job at the hospital. Bridges helped me get stable, go to school, and keep a job. I had my head on right. I knew what I needed. I just needed help getting stabilized.”

Desiree

The cost is usually between \$8,000 and \$15,000 per household for rental subsidies. While that might seem significant, consider that the average homeless shelter spends \$11,000 per person per year.

The net result of Rapid Rehousing is a substantial decrease in costs to our community, because people who are stably housed are less likely to use emergency services including hospitals, jails, ambulances, police intervention, and emergency shelter than those experiencing homelessness.

Rapid Rehousing gives people independence, takes them out of a crisis, increases safety, and provides a permanent housing solution for about the same or less average cost than shelter.

Rapid Rehousing works, and we’re proud to be the leading provider of Rapid Rehousing services in Howard County.

From a “Toxic Situation” to Stably Housed



“I needed to leave a toxic situation, but I had never been on my own. Bridges guided me through the steps. They helped me feel confident that I was making a good decision.”

Lisa

In Focus: Providing Rental Assistance to Struggling Households

Many Bridges clients have suffered greatly during the pandemic. As an example, in one of our programs, 60% of clients have incurred economic hardship from COVID.

Bridges is just one of several nonprofit organizations in Howard County that has received a series of rental assistance grants, starting in the summer of 2020. With the grants provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Treasury, and other sources, Bridges provided rental assistance to 55 households in the past fiscal year.

Says program manager Kim Pace, “These rental assistance funds are the difference between housing stability and homelessness for vulnerable members of our community. Their livelihoods were shut off due to the national emergency. That was a necessary step to protect all of us. Now it’s our obligation as a country to give them a hand up.”

Rental Assistance Means a Fresh Start

One Bridges client, Nadia, describes the experience of receiving rental assistance:

“I got behind in my rent when I was laid off from my job due to COVID. And then I got very sick with COVID and pneumonia, along with my kids. Without help, I would not have been able to catch up with my rent, and I would have been homeless with my four kids. Thanks to Bridges, I received a fresh start.”



Nadia

FY21 Board of Directors

Jessica Zuniga, Chair	Reid Spearman PhD, Secretary
Bill Salganik, Vice-Chair	Ruth Hoang, Treasurer
James Collins	Rogers Lewis, M.D.
Sue Lowcock Harris	Russ Snyder
Cassandra Jones Havard	Tracey Williams
Waqas Hussain	

Bridges Staff Members

- Bola Afolabi – Program Manager
- Jen Broderick – Executive Director
- Yuri Choi – Housing Advocate
- Kike Fisher-Akinyemi – Housing Advocate
- Dana Fleming – Housing Advocate (NEW this year!)
- Tiarra Ford – Housing Advocate
- Denise Gordon – Program Associate
- Karen Hammann – Finance Manager
- Mary Ann Matthews – Office Manager
- Kristin Miller – Development and Marketing Manager
- Anna Montagnese – Program Assistant (NEW this year!)
- Rebecca Ostroski – Lead Housing Advocate
- Kim Pace – Program Manager
- Mary Ann Paul – Bookkeeper
- Dana Sohr – Deputy Directory & Program Manager
- Tenille Wilson – Employment Retention Specialist
- Danielle Winston – Housing Advocate
- Isabella Yusimova – Financial Associate (NEW this year!)

Strategic Planning for the Future

Board and staff members worked throughout the past year to develop a strategic plan for fiscal years 2022 through 2024. Our key priorities:

- Develop a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion program
- Strengthen existing Bridges programs
- Sustain and diversify funding
- Remain an employer of choice
- Expand Board Leadership Development

A Board Member’s View

“Self-sufficiency is a powerful tool to prevent and end homelessness. Our programs encourage that self-sufficiency. I volunteer because I want to be a part of the effort to changes lives for the better.”

Reid Spearman, PhD
Board Secretary

