

**MetroWest Outreach Connection: Some of the Clients receiving financial assistance during the past year (Please note that the names have been changed to protect the clients' confidentiality.)**

The following are some recent clients that have been funded out of MetroWest Outreach Connection's Homeless Prevention and Health Through Housing Program. Our ability to assist other needy clients has been diminished by the amounts indicated.

1. Gretchen is a mother of two, ages 3 and 4. She is a victim of domestic violence. Presently, she is being assisted through Voices Against Violence's high risk unit. Because Voices no longer has grant funds available, they contacted MetroWest Legal Services to see if they could secure funding from another source. MetroWest Outreach Connection received a grant application for rent arrears, utility arrears, telephone arrears and moving expenses. We paid all expenses other than the rent arrears from a grant specifically for victims of domestic violence. The rent **arrears is \$2,521**. This sum must be paid in order to preserve the client's Section 8 certificate.

The client's abuser is her husband who is the father of her children. He is currently being held on criminal charges from a gun-related incident with local police. During their time together, Gretchen's abuser controlled all the money. As a result, she owes rent to her present and past landlords as well as the other arrearages indicated. She cannot move to a safe location and new housing without clearing up her past rent arrearages. She cannot have her electricity turned on in the new apartment without clearing up that arrearage.

Gretchen is being represented by MWLS in her Section 8 termination matter. The funds she is seeking will enable her to keep this mobile voucher. MWOC paid her rent arrearage out of Homeless Prevention Program funds.

2. Maria lives with her 19 year old daughter and her 1 year old grandson. She is a long-time public housing resident who has always paid her rent on time. She lost her employment during the summer and fell behind in her rent. Like other families, her household expenses and travel were increasing at a time when she had lost her income. The public housing authority was willing to stop eviction proceedings if she could secure funds to pay her **rent arrears of \$987**. MWOC paid that sum out of Homeless Prevention funds.
3. Wanda is a 24 year old single mother of two young children ages 5 and 2. She has, historically, always paid her full rent on time. Recently, she fell behind in her payments and accumulated \$827 in rent arrears. She had been working as a full-time waitress and had a hard time making ends meet while caring for her two young children. She was forced to leave her job entirely. Her prospects for finding new employment are bright now. She has received a daycare voucher for her two-year old son. Her five year old daughter is in kindergarten in the Framingham Public Schools. She is now able to secure full-time employment with her younger child's daycare needs being met. In the interim, Wanda's parents are helping her and her rent has been recalculated to zero until she finds

a new job. Paying the **\$827 in rent arrears** prevented her from eviction and the loss of her Section 8 voucher.

4. Andrew, his wife, three daughters and grandson live in subsidized housing in downtown Framingham. Recently, Andrew became seriously ill and he has had eight surgeries in the past three months, one of them to remove a good portion of his intestines. Not only was it necessary for him to stop working but his wife also had to leave work to care for him during his recovery. Framingham Housing Authority set the family's portion of the rent at 0 until one or both of the parents go back to work. They were in **rent arrears totaling \$700**. MWOC approved payment for that amount to help the family avoid eviction proceedings.
5. John, Amy and their one-year old toddler were evicted from their apartment because the landlord himself had to occupy the unit. John, a painter, has always had enough work, but two of his most recent clients did not pay him for work he had done. In breach of contract, one client owed him \$2,800 while another one suspended a project leaving a balance of \$900 unpaid. Making matters worse, John's vehicle needed repairs leaving the family with no transportation to continue to look for housing. MWOC paid for a motel for the family, now homeless, for four nights then made plans to take John to look at apartments. MWOC paid **\$1,800 for the first month and a security deposit**. A deposit of \$75 was also paid to Hudson Light and Power so that the utilities could be turned on. John was able to pay for the repairs to his vehicle enabling him to travel to work sites.
6. Tanya and her four year old daughter were being evicted from public housing in Natick. Tanya had been receiving child support that was discontinued by her former husband. Due to child care issues, Tanya could only work part time. She has no relatives in the area to help her. She fell behind in her rent and was served notice that she was going to be evicted. She owed **\$700 in rent arrears**. MWOC paid the arrears to keep her from being evicted and losing her Section 8 voucher. Tanya has reopened her child support case through the Department of Revenue.
7. Karen and her five year old daughter needed the last month and security deposit to sustain her tenancy in a new apartment. She is a hard working single mother. Last November, she broke her leg as a result of a fall that she incurred, due to the negligence of the landlord whose responsibility it was for the upkeep of the property. She was out of work for an extensive period of time and she was unable to pay her rent. The arrearages snow-balled to such an extent she was not able to repay it and save her tenancy. She was not eligible for a shelter placement at that time, nor did she have any family that she could stay with. The risk of homelessness was eminent. She was able to find a landlord that would allow her to move in immediately by paying the first month rent, with the understanding that she would find a way to provide him with the last month and security deposit. Fortunately, after she recovered from her injury, she was able to find work as a housekeeper. She now receives \$110 per week in court-ordered

child support. A FEMA grant paid \$750 for the first month, Karen paid \$500 and **MWOC paid the balance of \$1,000.**

8. Maria applied for assistance for one month's rent arrears, **\$717**. Every member of this family is deaf. The mother went to the bank in December 2008 to cash a Social Security check to pay rent and other bills. When she reached the car, she realized that the check was missing. She went into the bank frantic and the employees helped her search for the missing check to no avail. Another social service organization helped the family pay their electrical bill.
9. Mrs. Rodriguez has been living in public housing for the past two years. She fell behind in her rent for an unusual reason. Her adult daughter and three young grandchildren who do not live with her experienced a financial emergency because she was not receiving the child support to which she was entitled. Mrs. Rodriguez had no other choice but to financially rescue her daughter and grandchildren. A grant of **\$533** helped this grandmother avoid eviction.
10. John is a 42 year old single person who has some very serious cognitive limitations. He has worked at the Stop and Shop in Natick for the past sixteen years. In the past, he was living with his sister who helped him pay the bills and provided structure for him. His hours were cut down when the manager wanted hire some students for the summer. He missed his first rent payment in August. In addition, his 1988 automobile needed expensive repairs. He fell several months behind in his rent. The landlord wants to work out a plan to help him catch up. Another social service agency is also willing to help. MWOC provided him with **\$1,000** in financial assistance to help pay his rent arrears.
11. Mrs. Sergio is a 75 year old single woman who has been homeless for the past year. She lived in a motel because she could not afford the \$1,100 apartment and the related expenses associated with living there. She found a studio apartment that she can afford for \$650 per month plus electric. Her advocate requested the first month rent plus half of the security deposit. MWOC provided her with **\$975** so that she could become permanently housed.