HOW
CREATE OPPORTUNITIES. REBUILD LIVES.

2019 Annual Report
2019 marked HOW’s 37th year and proved that four decades into our work, HOW is more relevant than ever as we look toward the future.

Last year we completed our first ground-up construction development broadening our work further into affordable housing. We also enriched our service offerings, expanded our health navigation supports to clients, and brought together thought leaders in meaningful conversation about the future of affordable housing and strategies to ensure its preservation.

HOW’s constant innovation has enabled the agency to offer more to our clients each passing year—more programming, more services, more resources. The self-determination of every individual who walks through our doors is what inspires our work, and our outcomes. In 2019 HOW provided 1,300 clients with personalized programming built around goals they defined. It was an honor to be a part of their story, providing assistance in times of hardship; and sharing in joy during moments of celebration. Every accomplishment, whether completing a certification course, securing a job, or mastering a new healthy recipe, begins with a safe place to call home. That’s why we remain committed to the Housing First model.

With this annual report we invite you to take a closer look at our work and become part of HOW’s extensive community of compassionate support. Alongside clients’ achievements we highlight the agency’s annual success and hope you too feel inspired by HOW’s remarkable clients, staff, and community just as we do each day.

Britt Shawver, CEO
James Fox, President
Housing Growth

We know success starts with the stability of a home. HOW provides individuals and families safe, affordable housing across the metro area. In 2019 we added 61 new units of housing including affordable, low-income, and special needs.

I love my apartment. I live in a very nice neighborhood. I feel safe and secure thanks to HOW.

HOW was pleased to take part in an Enterprise Zone development in Chicago’s Jackson Park neighborhood serving as the community partner and ensuring support and housing stability for a number of units in the building. With a long term plan for reinvestment, HOW is excited to lend its expertise to this project.

99%
of clients in permanent supportive housing maintained housing for 12 months or exited to permanent housing within 12 months of coming to HOW.

87%
of clients exited to permanent or stable living conditions in 2019.

LOOKING CLOSER

5,983 additional units of affordable housing were needed in the Skokie/Evanston area in 2017* to meet the number of qualifying households. While HOW has long served the Evanston community, the completion of the building marks the beginning of the organization’s role as an affordable housing provider within the city. To recognize this relationship HOW and Evanstonians gathered throughout the year for building tours, barbecues, and celebrations centered around learning and community building. The largest of these celebrations was HOW’s annual Gala, aptly named Welcome Home to Evanston, where over $150,000 was raised for the organization.

* Source: DePaul University Institute for Housing Studies, 2017 State of Rental Housing in Cook County.

9,630 outreach and referral contacts were made.

627 households received services from HOW.

1,336 people, including 592 children, were served.
HOW offers housing and services to a diverse population of individuals and families across Chicagoland, ranging in age from newborns to seniors. While HOW serves all genders, over 90% of families are led by single-women and on average, include 2 children. Nearly 80% of clients are African American and all have some level of exposure to trauma, poverty, violence and systems of oppression. Almost all of the individuals and families HOW serves live at or below the federal poverty line, and many have experienced homelessness for extended periods of time, are living with HIV/AIDS or a chronic or mental health issue, and/or are youth aging out of the foster care system.

HOW’s new visual program model outlines how the agency works to achieve its mission through specialized services for specific client populations.

**CORE VALUES**
At the center of everything HOW does are our values. The following provide purpose, clarity and guidance to our work:
- Justice
- Compassion
- Collaboration
- Integrity
- Innovation

**PRIMARY PROGRAMS**
HOW’s three pillars of programming provide fundamental support to individuals and families across the housing insecurity and homelessness spectrum.

**SUPPORT SERVICES**
HOW offers services that help clients overcome a range of barriers. The diversity of services allows all clients to partner with HOW to determine the resources and support they need to thrive.

**SERVICE PHILOSOPHIES**
HOW uses a variety of proven service models rooted in best practices to effectively empower individuals to achieve long-term stability and success.

For almost a decade, HOW’s Employment Program has helped hundreds of individuals secure jobs and achieve educational goals in pursuit of their dream careers. HEP pairs comprehensive career services, such as workforce development training, educational programming, and job placement assistance with individual counseling to help clients obtain financial stability.

In 2019 HEP updated its programming, expanded its reach, and planned future changes to its service delivery model. One of the largest changes was a complete overhaul of HEP’s programming which previously primarily focused instruction on topics directly related to employment. The newly revamped programming is more inclusive and covers secondary employment topics like financial literacy, transitioning benefits, and selecting and managing childcare. Additionally, the HEP team created a formalized onboarding process for clients entering the program and strengthened its relationships with employment partners to provide more referrals and leads for those seeking jobs.

Over the course of the year Employment Specialists shared the new content with more clients than ever by expanding service delivery to the South Side where almost half of HOW’s clients reside. Beginning in January of 2020 HEP will launch its five-day Job Readiness Training seminar which will be held once a month at both HOW’s north and south office locations.

"I am so grateful for the Employment Team. They helped me put my education to use and find the perfect job."
As a provider of permanent supportive housing HOW has long been committed to its clients’ overall health and wellbeing. In 2018 the organization formally launched a new health initiative which aimed to help clients living with HIV or AIDS stabilize their health with the targeted support of a Health Care Case Manager (HCCM). The project’s early success propelled the growth of the Health Program which now serves a diverse group of individuals and families across the health spectrum.

During 2019, 60% of clients served noted a disability when they entered HOW (including 16% of clients who had two or more disabilities recorded at entry).

The Health Program’s expansion in 2019 opened service offerings to two new cohorts of HOW clients: individuals with chronic illnesses and young families. Mirroring HOW’s one-on-one case management model, the Health Program was built to foster communication and trust between HCCMs and clients. Gaining a deeper understanding of clients’ health goals enables the team to provide full-scale care coordination including scheduling appointments, assisting with billing and medications, attending appointments, and general patient advocacy. In addition to care coordination, the team provides supplemental support such as helping to secure SNAP benefits and healthy food, connecting clients to mental health services, or providing additional resources to parents and their young children.

HOW’s health team works with the organization’s 20+ Case Managers to provide assistance and aid for clients with more generalized health concerns. The program hopes to expand again in 2020 to better meet the needs of this growing client cohort.

As the Manager of HOW’s Health Program, Jonathan Doyle knows the ins and outs of the United States’ health care system. But despite his extensive knowledge and numerous credentials, it is patience that he credits for finding success in his work. “The health care system can really challenge you,” tells Jonathan, “and it usually happens at a time when you aren’t up for a challenge. But that’s why we’re here.”

Jonathan joined HOW in 2017 working with a select group of clients living in permanent supportive housing. His role blended case management services with health care coordination for individuals with HIV and AIDS to add enhanced support for clients’ specialized health care needs.

"When I started one of the largest challenges was gaining clients’ trust. So often they were let down by the public benefits system again and again. But over time that’s changed and we’ve been able to better help people.

Jonathan’s commitment to helping others secure and maintain healthcare developed from his personal experiences as a young adult. At one point health insurance was out of reach for himself and other members of his family and community. “People close to me died because they couldn’t get the care they needed,” he shares “and in a way that started me down this path.” In 2019 HOW’s health care program expanded and Jonathan became the organization’s first full-time Health Care Case Manager. As such, he was able to provide a larger more diverse group of clients with extensive care coordination and developed additional services to address a wide range of needs for his varied client population.

“We try and catch people upstream—get them signed up for benefits, Medicaid or Medicare, SNAP benefits... so they have a chance to be healthy and not end up in the hospital.” As Jonathan has become more enmeshed in clients’ health journeys he has become a stronger advocate of patient rights and health care reform in his work and personal life. He hopes these advocacy efforts will make finding coverage easier and allow more people to connect to care earlier without needing the assistance of someone like him.

Today Jonathan runs HOW’s Health Program, developing new ways to help clients achieve health goals while continuing to provide individuals and families with essential care coordination and benefit services. 
When asked to tell a bit about herself, S. Hinton began by reciting a long list of academic achievements, before gushing about her children and sharing her excitement around owning a home soon. Her sense of pride and positive attitude is infectious. Ms. Hinton has always had big dreams and believed in herself, but she is still often struck by how far she’s come.

At the age of nineteen Ms. Hinton found herself homeless, fearing what the future would hold for herself and her one-year-old daughter. Luckily, the young family was connected to HOW and quickly received an apartment and additional support services provided by the organization.

Ms. Hinton has loved helping others since she was a little girl and knew she wanted to be a nurse from a young age. With the stability of a HOW apartment, she was able to refocus her attention on going back to school. She mapped out her educational journey and enrolled in Malcolm X City College, where she secured her Associate’s Degree, then graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago with her Bachelor’s of Nursing, and is currently working towards her Master’s in Public Health (MPH). “Ms. Hinton always says, ‘Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm,’” recalls Vanessa Koonce, Ms. Hinton’s Case Manager of two years, “and she embodies that positivity and has used it to find success.”

During the day Ms. Hinton is a student, diligently taking notes and listening to lectures, but at night she plays the very different role of a mother caring for her children. She knows graduating with her MPH will elevate her career, but also thinks of the degree as a reminder to her children that they can accomplish whatever they set their minds to. Ms. Hinton occasionally had difficulties securing basic necessities as a student with little income, but knew her Case Manager and the HOW team was always there to help. “Vanessa always makes a way,” says Ms. Hinton, “If I needed milk formula, diapers, or help with something in the apartment, Vanessa got it to me—she was there.”

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“How is a great place. I’ve used it as a stepping stone to become a better version of myself. It’s helped me prosper in the best way, so one day I can donate to the same program that helped me.”
FINANCIALS

**Income**

- **$8.95M**
  - 15% Government Sources
  - 5% Foundations and Corporations
  - 2% Private Individual Support
  - 2% Fundraising Events
  - 75% Earned Income/Program Revenue

**Expenses**

- **$9.10M**
  - 3% General Administration
  - 3% Program Related
  - 3% Fundraising
  - 17% Non-operating Expenses

**Architects**
- ($25,000 and up)
  - Individuals
    - Howard Conan Jr.
    - Denis and Martha Pierce
  - Organizations
    - Anonymous
    - Chicago Community Trust
    - Crown Family Philanthropies
    - J. Jill Compassion Fund
    - Polk Bros. Foundation
    - The Hinshelwood Junior Woman’s Club
    - Urban Innovations
    - VNA Foundation
    - Wallace Family Foundation

**Government Funders**
- Chicago Department of Family & Support Services
- Chicago Department of Public Health
- Illinois Department of Human Services
- Illinois Housing Development Authority
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- US Social Security Administration

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    - Marjorie Benton
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*Unaudited numbers. If you’d like a copy of HOW’s audited financial statement, please contact us at (773) 465-5770.*
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Merchant Giving Project
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North Shore Kosher Bakery
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Daniel Sullivan
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