

COLORADO COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Denver, Colorado

Renaissance at Civic Center Apartments

The Renaissance at Civic Center Apartments is a unique and innovative approach to preserving and improving existing low cost housing in downtown Denver. This project became the focal point for Denver's Housing First Collaborative, a multi-agency collaborative addressing chronic homelessness.

The Colorado Coalition for the Homeless also located two other Assertive Community Treatment teams in the project to address the mental health and supportive service needs of residents and the community.



Residents of this project had been homeless an average of eight years prior to entry; after two years 77 percent continue to be housed in the program. One outstanding outcome is a \$31,545 reduction in emergency costs per resident, with increased health and mental health status for residents.

The rehabilitation of the former YMCA building was a careful balance of resident needs, supportive service needs, and historic rehabilitation requirements. Many original features were retained such as the hardwood floors from the basketball courts complete with the foul line striping.

The Coalition faced an uphill battle when it came to acquiring the building for this project. One of the biggest challenges was convincing the YMCA to sell the building to the Coalition rather than the highest bidder. Fortunately, both organizations were able to reach a compromise with the Coalition purchasing the building at asking price and selling a portion of it back to the YMCA so that organization could maintain its downtown fitness center.

This 216-unit project uses a client centered, integrated service approach for residents with both mental health and substance use histories. There is the clinical capacity to address both issues simultaneously. Tenants are treated by the integrated team for both psychiatric and substance use issues.

The Coalition successfully raised the public's awareness of historic preservation and the need for more affordable and supportive housing for homeless persons.

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SPONSORING ORGANIZATION

Since its founding over 20 years ago, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless has provided housing for more than 3,000 individuals and families and created 1,300 units of housing. The Coalition also provides integrated health, mental health and support services to more than 10,000 homeless persons each year. The mission of the organization is to work collaboratively towards the prevention of homelessness and the creation of lasting solutions for homeless and at-risk families, children, and individuals throughout Colorado.

FUNDING FOR RENISSANCE AT CIVIC CENTER

- Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits
- Enterprise Communities
- Economic Development Initiative Grant
- HUD Shelter Plus Care, Supportive Housing Program, Section 8, Section 108, and HOME

CREATIVE APPROACHES TO SERVICE DELIVERY

- 24 hour on-site staffing and fully integrated housing and services
- Client centered service approach for persons with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse issues
- Next steps focus group made up of residents and staff meets monthly to target program improvements



BOARD LEADERSHIP

Board Chairman: Jay Brown, Professor of Law

Vice Chairman: Jim Winston

Treasurer: Peter Calamari, Vice President, Vestar Capital Partners

STAFF LEADERSHIP

President: John Parvensky

Housing Development Director: David Klimut

CONTACT INFORMATION

Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
2111 Champa Street
Denver, CO 80205
303.293.2217 (p)
303.293.2309 (f)
www.coloradocoalition.org

IN 1988, TO COMMEMORATE FANNIE MAE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY, the Fannie Mae Foundation announced the Awards of Excellence Program, which seeks to encourage and recognize non-profit organizations working to develop and maintain housing for low-income Americans. The program also is intended to encourage more corporations and foundations to be involved as funding and investment partners. The Awards were renamed in honor of David O. Maxwell, who retired in 1991 after 10 years of service as chairman and chief executive officer of Fannie Mae and chairman, Fannie Mae Foundation.

FOR THE 17TH MAXWELL AWARDS PROGRAM, the Foundation, in collaboration with the Partnership to End Long Term Homelessness is awarding up to \$75,000 to each selected nonprofit organization.

THE FANNIE MAE FOUNDATION creates affordable homeownership and housing opportunities through innovative partnerships and initiatives that build healthy, vibrant communities across the United States.

THE PARTNERSHIP TO END LONG TERM HOMELESSNESS was created to galvanize the philanthropic leadership and dollars needed to end long-term homelessness in America. Serving as an open knowledge network for funders, the Partnership shares strategic thinking, wide-ranging experience, and expertise to prevent and address