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Metro Social Services Newsletter - January 2016

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Metropolitan Social Services

January 2016 Newsletter

MSS Program Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements

[Metro Social Services](#) now has an online [Program Description and Eligibility Criteria Summary](#). It describes the specific services provided by each direct service program, an explanation of how to apply and hours of services.

Director's Note

As we embark on a new year I look forward to the opportunities to invest our energy around family sustainability. MSS was

Information is provided about the Burial/Cremation Program, Senior Nutrition Program and Family Support Program.

MSS Provides Christmas for Families

Metro Social Services along with National Black Police Association-Nashville Chapter (NBPA), Tennessee Bikers Education Association (TBEA) and The Hamptons at Woodland Pointe served (181) families & (467) children which is our largest giveaway. While this is an annual event we look for new partners and this year, we were honored to be contacted by The Hamptons at Woodland Point apartment community and they donated a van full to the top full of holiday items for families.

Working with our partners to serve the neediest is always rewarding and enjoyable especially when we partner with such great people. On December 5, 2015, the TBEA conducted their annual toy run where the motorcycle clubs caravan to Metro Social Services and bring toys and bicycles. This year they brought over 100 bicycles for children of all ages. The Christmas bag distribution was held on Saturday December 19, 2015, with volunteers from all partnering organizations and the day was filled with smiles, hugs and tears of joy.



Thanksgiving Baskets for Families

Metro Social Services along with National Black Police Association-Nashville Chapter (NBPA), Tennessee Bikers Education Association (TBEA), Piccadilly Restaurant, Tennessee State University, Salvation Army and Save A Lot Grocery Store sponsored our annual Thanksgiving basket giveaway on Saturday November 21, 2015.

fortunate to identify funding for our Family Support Program that will assist with housing and related assistance.

Of the people who come through our doors, 87% requested housing and related assistance. We hope that this initial effort to assist more families with obtaining and maintaining housing will allow MSS to support more families in the Davidson County community.

Renee Pratt

Executive Director

March 1

Save the Date - March 1

On March 1, Metro Social Services will release its 7th Annual Community Needs Evaluation. The report will again provide objective and current data about Davidson County's poverty and unmet needs. Data from the U. S. Census Bureau indicates that 19.9% of Davidson County residents lived in poverty in 2014, or about 129,000 people.

Information will be provided about specific social/human service issues: Aging & Disability, Food & Nutrition, Health & Human Development, Housing & Neighborhoods and Workforce & Economic

Tennessee State University continues to host this event and provides some wonderful volunteers. This year we served 300 families with a complete uncooked Thanksgiving dinner including desert. Without the dedication of the partners and volunteers, this event would not be as successful and able to serve families in need.

Planning, Coordination and Social Data Analysis

MSS [Planning, Coordination & Social Data Analysis](#) identifies social/human service community needs, provides information and consultation. In addition to the annual community needs evaluation, it provides additional resources available [online](#).

Planning, Coordination & Social Data Analysis has also created a series of [maps](#) that show the distribution of poverty and other characteristics by census tracts and Council Districts.

The documents produced provide an current overview of social service needs, including the magnitude and patterning of poverty. As a result, policy makers, funding sources, service providers and others can use objective data on which to alleviate the detrimental effects of poverty.

MSS Customer Service Success Story

The Metro Social Services (MSS) caseworker had been working with the customer since November 30, 2014, on housing and getting her legal issues in order. Her barriers to permanent housing were her credit score and her multiple misdemeanors/past legal history. The customer was at the end of her line with options she could choose from and had nowhere else to go.

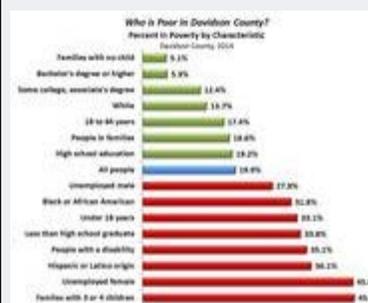
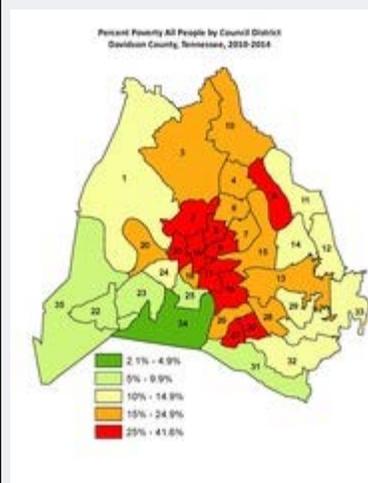
Upon coming to MSS and working with the caseworker we were able to identify some other options and develop a plan to help them move forward. The MSS caseworker assisted the customer with navigating the service delivery systems, often advocating for her to receive services from many different agencies.

At the end of the case, the customer had been to legal aid and all of her misdemeanors have been paid off. With other debts, she has enrolled in payment program options to get them resolved and she is in good standing. The customer received a section 8 voucher in January 2014 and moved into her new

Opportunity. Previous editions of the Community Needs Evaluation are available [online](#).

Additional information will be released soon with details of the release event, but for now, please plan to attend on March 1. Additional details will follow soon.

Included in the 2015 Community Needs Evaluation will be the map below showing the poverty rate by Metro Council District and the data below showing who is likely to be poor in Davidson County. (Please click images for larger view.)



Coordinated Entry for Homeless Families

In November 2015, Metro

place on 2/19/15. At present all of her basic needs have been met and her case has been successfully closed.

2015 3rd Annual Ride 2 Thrive

Metro Social Services along with National Black Police Association-Nashville Chapter (NBPA), [Tennessee Bikers Education Association](#) (TBEA), Piccadilly Restaurant, Metro Parks & Recreation and Save A Lot Grocery Store sponsored the [3rd Annual Ride 2 Thrive Event](#). This year the event was held at Cumberland Park on the River Front on Saturday April 18, 2015 from noon to 6 pm. The event was free to the public and citizens had access to information, resources, screenings, music, food, face painting, balloon artist, door prizes, a kid's zone and family fun for all. There were motorcycles and corvettes on display for people to see and we had an added bonus this year we had a dunking booth that staff so graciously sat in for the children to have their fun.

We continue to be excited about this event and all of the vendors, screenings, resources and information that will be provided to all citizens of Davidson County. Every year we survey the vendors and this year they were all very complimentary of the beautiful space and view that was provided by Metro Parks via Cumberland Park.

Our goal is to go to different areas of town and provide this event. We strive to serve whenever we can in an effort to educate and inform people of all of the services and resources that are available to them here in Nashville to help them.....Thrive in their homes, Thrive in their community and Thrive in our city.

Metro Social Services Welcomes New Staff



Social Services began a new Coordinated Entry Program for Homeless Families. Coordinated entry is a tool designed to ensure that families experiencing homelessness and families at imminent risk of [homelessness](#) are matched, as quickly as possible, with the intervention that will most efficiently and effectively end the family's housing crisis.

The Family Shelter Intake Team is a critical part of the coordinated entry system. The team is designed to help strengthen access to homelessness prevention resources and emergency shelter for families who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness throughout Davidson County. The Family Shelter Intake Team institutes consistent and uniform assessment and referral processes to determine and secure the most appropriate and actionable response to each family's housing crisis.



HERO's Partnership

MSS has developed a formalized partnership with Metro Nashville Public Schools' (MNPS) HERO Program that provides case



Kathryn Cavan - Kathryn is a licensed social worker who comes to us from Long Island, New York. She graduated from Syracuse University with her MSW and has worked with diverse populations. She has worked with ALS patients, veterans, active duty soldiers and families, the elderly, sexual assault victims and disabled children. She is also a U.S. Army veteran who has served in the Army Reserves for over 10 years and continues to serve. Kathryn is also interested and involved in social work research. Her interests include the female veteran population, veteran suicide and homelessness.

Lesley Head - In September 2015, Lesley began working with the Metro Homelessness Commission as the Hospital to Home Program Manager. He says that he is humbled by the opportunity to work with a variety of stakeholders here in Nashville as critical pathways to permanent housing are created for some of the most medically vulnerable citizens. Lesley lived in San Francisco for 20 years (Go Giants!) and worked for the San Francisco Department of Public Health before moving here last year. He received an MA degree in Organizational Psychology from Teachers College in NYC and an MSW degree from San Francisco State University. He is excited about what the future holds for Nashville and looks forward to being a part of that vision with you all.

Lisa Ricketts - Lisa is the new Chief Financial Officer for MSS. She came to us from the Metro Human Resources Department. Lisa received her Accounting Degree from North Carolina State University – Raleigh. Lisa and her husband recently traveled to Vietnam, and it was the first time she was back in her country after 40 years away.

Nicole Rucker – Nicole was born and raised in Nashville, one of three children in her family. She was educated in Metro Nashville Public Schools and received a BSW from TSU in

management to families experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless and have children in Metro Schools.

Metro Social Services has received 111 referrals from the HERO office and MNPS school counselors to assist families with their housing barriers. The MSS staff members are currently working with 62 HERO families, including 159 children, with financial stability, housing stability, educational stability and health stability goals through on going case management. MSS caseworkers helped 32 families with 73 children obtain permanent housing between October 1, 2014 and December 31, 2015.

Partnering to Provide Food for Seniors in Need

In order to expand food availability for senior citizens, the MSS [Senior Nutrition Program](#) is beginning its second year of a partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank to provide weekend meals to seniors in need. Each weekday, hundreds of senior citizens receive meals through the MSS Nutrition Program, but meals are not provided on weekends.

Through a grant from Second Harvest Food Bank, food has

1991, followed by graduate studies. Nicole's previous experience includes working as a Social Worker at the Martha O'Bryan Center, 15 years with the Mental Health Coop and for the last five years with at-risk juveniles. She is passionate about helping others and says she has a great family, including her 12-year old daughter who is now involved in service work. Nicole is active with her church in service work in Nashville and enjoys traveling, arts and crafts and spending time with family and friends.

Lictoria Woods - Lictoria hails from the small town of Bolivar in West Tennessee. After she graduated high school in 1995, she relocated to Nashville, which she has called home for 20 years. She is proud alumna of Tennessee State University from which she received her BS degree in Social Work in December 2000. Since graduation she has used her Social Work degree in both the public and private sectors, most recently as Foster Parent Training Coordinator/Recruiter and Permanency Specialist, a role that allowed her the opportunity to advocate on behalf of children in the foster care system. When not working, she enjoys quality time adventures with her adorable two-year old son.

been provided to participants of the MSS weekday programs so they will have enough food for the weekend. About 320 people participate each month, and they receive a food box plus shelf stable meals.

During the coming year, these meals will continue to be provided at specific locations throughout Davidson County, including the Hickory Hollow, Madison, Murfreesboro Road and Old Hickory areas.



Previous newsletters are available [online](#).

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