Autism Housing Pathways, Inc.
2017 Annual Report

2017 was a year of dramatic growth and development at Autism Housing Pathways. In April, we opened a physical office and launched individual housing counseling. We completed a training video for direct support staff. Our family training efforts reached more people than ever before, and we began an exciting new grant process that will allow us to reach a broader demographic in the coming year. Advocacy efforts to improve the ability of families to create housing options moved forward, beginning to bear fruit after the end of the fiscal year. In addition, we retooled our financial model to better balance our funding streams. Our work was recognized on a national level, as AHP's president and vice-president presented at the Autism Society of America annual conference to a standing room only crowd.

Services to families and individuals

A long-term goal of launching housing counseling to families and individuals came to fruition in April. AHP began offering three options for housing counseling: through fee-for-service in our new office or in clients' homes; through an arrangement with the Asperger/Autism Network (AANE) (also fee-for-service); and at no cost to clients through our institutional members. Over 50 families or individuals have been served to date. Opening an office was integrally connected to launching counseling, as we needed dedicated private space to serve clients. The new office is located in Winchester, and is walking distance to both bus and commuter rail.

A natural outgrowth of housing counseling has been working with families and individuals to complete housing applications. While AHP had already been holding Section 8 sign-up clinics around the state several times a year, we had not previously assisted with completion of the far more complex and time consuming applications used for state vouchers, and other affordable and subsidized housing options. With a grant from the Rotary Club of Burlington, we began subscribing to Housingworks.net, which allows us to locate open waiting lists, and partially pre-fill housing applications. We have, of course, continued to hold Section 8 clinics, helping 48 individuals at six clinics to complete the Centralized Waiting List and Department of Housing and Community Development Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program applications.

To better meet the needs of those we serve, AHP President Catherine Boyle completed an additional 30 hours of training in HUD housing counseling through the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, as well as a 2 hour Housingworks training.

2017 was a banner year for introductory housing training. Variations on our standard two hour introductory presentation, "Thinking about housing" were delivered 23 times, reaching approximately 350 participants. These included numerous conference presentations, included one at the Autism Society of America national conference in Milwaukee. Other outreach activities included getting basic information out to families at 11 different conference and resource fair groups, and our second annual set of daily housing Tweets for Autism Month.

Our more comprehensive daylong workshop, "Learning about housing", was presented four times, in Marshfield, Framingham, Danvers, and Greenfield, to approximately 40 participants. The Greenfield workshop, together with a shorter presentation and Section 8 clinic in Hadley, mark an important watershed in our efforts to serve the entire state.

We completed much of the work of creating a manual for a program called SkillsHackers that will focus on children and adults learning daily living skills, with funding from the Winchester Rotary Club. The manual will be offered at no cost to camps, schools, after-school programs, day programs, and other interested organizations. Final work is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

In August, AHP began work on a new housing training grant from the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council. The bulk of the work for this grant will take place during FY2018, and will comprise four activities. First, a cohort of 12 individuals and their families will participate in a process comprising a daylong housing workshop for the families, housing workbooks for the individuals, completion of Section 8 applications, and an intensive three session person-centered planning process. Second, a group of 6-12 families in Boston will participate in a modified daylong housing workshop appropriate for those relying almost exclusively on public funds, with translations of workshop materials provided in 6 languages. Third, a cohort of five individuals will participate in an online multi-module training course in how to be a tenant. Finally, families will be organized to advocate with their legislators about the positive effects a proposed zoning relief bill would have for families seeking to create an accessory apartment for their family member.

Training of direct support staff

In September, we completed our third training video for direct support staff, this one on sensory regulation. Like the previous videos, it is appropriate for staff who do not speak English as their first language, and is accompanied by a multiple choice pre- and post-test. This new video is also accompanied by a resource list for staff to use in meeting sensory regulation needs. All the videos are free and may be accessed from the Autism Housing Pathways website. The series of videos was presented in September, and was well received, at Bridgewell's Building Bridges conference.

Advocacy

Autism Housing Pathways worked with Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts and The Arc of Massachusetts to raise awareness of a bill filed by Sen. Barbara L'Italien, which would give families the right to create an accessory apartment for the purpose of creating housing for an elderly or disabled family member on lots of 5,000 square feet or more. Such units could have two bedrooms, permitting a live-in aide, and property title could be passed to a special needs trust. The bill was approved by the Joint Committee on Housing in July, and is currently before the Senate Rules Committee.

Development of new housing models

In April, AHP, in collaboration with The Arc of Massachusetts and Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts, released a white paper, The MA Autism Housing Think Tank, reporting the outcome of the think tank held in September of 2016, and making a series of recommendations to state agencies and the Massachusetts Autism Commission. Think tank participants included individuals, families, state service and housing agencies, service providers, developers, lenders, and architects. 12 housing models were assessed for goodness of fit for 12 hypothetical resident profiles. Participants also brainstormed options for addressing the issue of homeless individuals with autism, and ways to better meet the housing needs of people with autism in the Commonwealth. The white paper and its recommendations has been presented to the housing committee of the Massachusetts Autism Commission.

One outgrowth of the think tank has been an effort to look into the possibility of modifying the state's Home Modification Loan Program (HMLP) to explicitly allow families to borrow HMLP funds for the purposes of partially funding accessory apartments. Ideas floated included increasing the loan amount available to $50,000, and making all loans available at 0% interest, with all payment deferred until title transfers. The

discussion made steady progress throughout FY2017. The modifications under discussion would fulfill the goal originally put forward in a bill Sen. L'Italien filed in 2015, for which AHP advocated.

New financial model

This year AHP sought to diversify its funding streams to reduce reliance on the exigencies of individual grant cycles. Individual housing counseling brings in a steady stream of fee-for-service revenue. In addition, we increased the number of our institutional members from two to five, and plan on extending it further in the coming year. Each institutional member pays $750 per year, and receives three days of services from AHP. Members can use this time as they wish, but generally choose the default option of two days of housing counseling appointments, and a one day Section 8 sign-up clinic. Institutional memberships allow us to offer housing counseling at no cost to the individual families participating. Fundraising events, including Dancing with the Celebrities, a pizza fundraiser, and Giving Tuesday, continue to provide over a third of our revenue.

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Autism Housing Pathways, Inc.
22 Willowdale Road
AND
175 Washington St. C-12
Winchester, MA 01890
(617) 893-8217
AHPhousing@comcast.net

www.autismhousingpathways.org

Financial Reporting

September 30, 2017

Balance Sheet

		09/30/16		09/30/17
Assets				
Cash Assets				
Bank Accounts	$ 31,960		$ 51,964	
Paypal	582		1,113	
		32,542		53,077
Accounts Receivable		-		-
Total Assets		$ 32,542		$ 53,077
Liabilitities				
Account Payable		$ 791		$ -
Payroll liabilities		-		493
Total Liabilities		791		493
Beginning Equity	49,547		31,751	
Net Revenue/(Expenses)	(17,795)		20,833	
Equity		$ 31,751		$ 52,584
Total Liabilities & Equity		$ 32,542		$ 53,077
		-		-

Financial Reporting

September 30, 2017

Revenues and Expenses

		09/30/16		09/30/17
Revenue				
Donations & Matching Gifts		$ 11,471	$ 22,726	
In-Kind Donations		-	-	
Exempt Purpose-related Income		-	10,526	
Grants		20,818	8,438	
Interest Income		12	9	
Membership		3,241	5,320	
Misc		390	1,001	
Adjustment		-	519	
Other Fundraising		9,115	17,606	
Total Revenue		**$ 45,047**		**$ 66,145**
Expenses				
Programs:				
	Advocacy	$ 3,245	$ 145	
	Family Training	45,696	5,090	
	Direct Care Professional Development	2,797	373	
	Outreach	2,945	2,523	
	Research	356	512	
	Shirts for Autism	-	42	
	Salary & Related	(incl. in fam. training)	11,649	
Total Programs:		55,039		20,334
Fundraising:				
	Expenses	3,081	9,595	
	Salary	-	3,883	
Total Fundraising:		3,081		13,478
Administrative				
	Accounting	-	899	
	Gov't Filing Fees	-	19	
	Insurance	1,230	1,381	
	Professional Services	395	-	
	Lobbying	258	368	
	Mailing	2	20	
	Salary & Related	1,781	4,383	

Supplies & Copies	158		432	
Training	729		290	
Travel	166		1,303	
Rent & Office Expenses	-		2,404	
Miscellaneous	(15)		1	
Total Administrative		4,721		11,500
Total Expenses		**$ 62,842**		**$45,312**
Net Revenue / (Expenses)		**$ (17,795)**		**$20,833**