

# H.O.M.E., Inc. 2023 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



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***Emmaus Homeless Shelter through the Seasons.***

# A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

A couple of years ago I was given a gift of an ornament made from old wood with the words “**Broken crayons still color**” inscribed on it. I’ve hung it on my door as a daily reminder of the beauty in each human being we encounter.

This year’s Annual Report gives us an opportunity to tell a story and express our gratitude to H.O.M.E.’s staff, volunteers, donors, partners, and other friends who make up this incredible community. A community dedicated to serving our most vulnerable neighbors through a variety of services, including emergency homeless shelters, homeless prevention, permanent supportive housing, food access, affordable childcare, a firewood bank and so much more.



**The last two years have been hard and transformational for many of us.** Never have the people we serve faced and overcome such significant challenges. We now know the public health crisis was just the beginning. The economic fall-out that followed was rapid and vast, and hit our community especially hard. It is difficult to overestimate the collective grief, and weariness that it brought. Yet it also brought moments of **clarity and joy**, and forged within many of us a renewed commitment to the mission and community we all serve. That together, we maintained services without interruption and, in fact, increased them to meet the need. **Instead of succumbing to the moment, we stood up to meet it.**

There are so many lessons to draw from the fortitude, creativity, and compassion that we see around us. The main lesson, for me, is that even as the world is going back to normal, this level of care and commitment **is and always will be our normal.**

The year ahead of us promises growth and change - including a renewed commitment to H.O.M.E.’s community garden and increased craft program capacity, a new family homeless outreach program and improved food pantry services. What will remain steadfast is our commitment to providing services with compassion, wisdom and understanding in partnership with people needing our help developing a path to independence.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to shape a better world. Whether you have volunteered, donated food or linens, made a financial donation, attended a zoom meeting, written a letter, shared a social media post, or cheered from the sidelines, you are an important part of our work and our hope for the future.

I wish you all a 2023 full of good health, safe shelter, and food in your cupboard - we could not have moved through this year without you!

Regards,  
Tracey Hair, Executive Director



9,780  
**BEDNIGHTS  
PROVIDED IN  
SHELTER**



118,180  
**POUNDS OF FOOD  
RESCUED AND  
DISTRIBUTED**



1,976  
**INDIVIDUALS  
SERVED THROUGH  
THE FOOD PANTRY**



# DIRECTOR'S REPORT





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It has been a busy, productive and inspiring year for H.O.M.E.'s Board of Directors. Although we have sadly lost one Board Member - Fr. Brent Was, who was forced to resign from the Board due to health concerns - we have added two new Board Members in the last year. They are Dennis Foley, who brings a wealth of experience in administrative and governmental positions to H.O.M.E., and Rev. Dr. Stephen York, the pastor of the Elm Street Congregational Church in Bucksport, and host for this year's annual meeting. Best wishes to Fr. Brent and a warm welcome to Dennis and Dr. York. We were also very happy to welcome the new staff representative, Karen Botta, to the Board.

Among the many things which the Board has been involved this last year is our work with Mary, Shannon, Ruth and Jade in taking some significant steps in ensuring that H.O.M.E.'s finances and financial systems are in good shape. Many thanks to Board Member, Sue Lessard, who worked very hard with our financial staff to greatly improve our budgeting process and our financial reporting systems. This progress is important, because it helps present H.O.M.E. in a positive light to funders.

Speaking of funders, it has been very exciting to support all the great work that Rosa and Tracey have done in obtaining a substantial number of grants to H.O.M.E. - including the very large grant recently from the Bezos Day 1 Foundation, which we hope will enable us to significantly improve the work we do with families experiencing homelessness.

It was also very satisfying to the Board to authorize the provision of health insurance to H.O.M.E.'s staff for the first time in our history. The Board has a deep understanding of what a talented and dedicated staff we have at H.O.M.E. and we are genuinely very happy that our staff now has this benefit.

We have also been very happy to support the many other big steps forward at H.O.M.E., including the expansion of shelter staffing and the addition of navigator staff, the major repairs to the Food Pantry/Volunteer Center building, and so many others.

In closing, I know that I speak for the entire Board when I say that our progress toward financial stability, the many facility improvements which have been made, our great leadership and our truly awesome staff H.O.M.E. is in an excellent position to continue the work begun by our founders for many years to come.

Regards,  
Mike Guare, Board Chair

### BOARD MEMBERS

- Mike Guare, Chair, Bangor
- Dr. Stephen York, Interim Vice Chair, Bucksport
- Susan Lessard, Treasurer, Bucksport
- Tammie Cox, Secretary, Sedgwick
- Karen Botta, Staff Rep., Orland
- William O'Donnell, Bucksport
- Dennis Foley, Orland
- Denise Keene, Verona Island
- Helen Stummer (Honorary), NJ
- Lucy Poulin, Board Member Emeritas, Orland



# FINANCES



As we look back in the rear-view mirror of 2022, we enter the second year of H.O.M.E.'s Five-Year Strategic Plan. We are on track with the proposed timelines, and we entered 2023 with revenue and expenses within budget expectations.

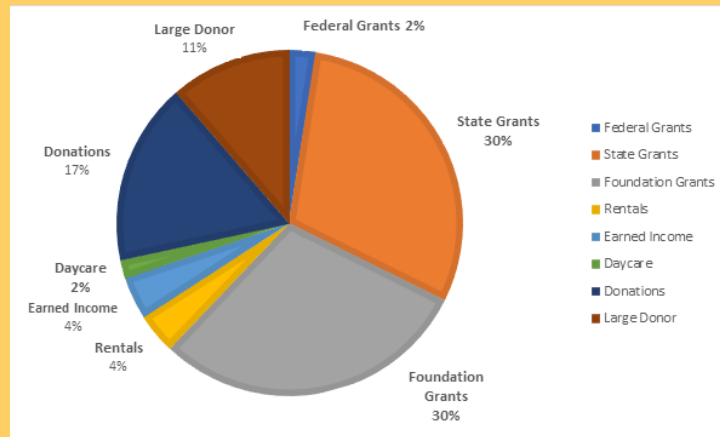
A highlight for revenue for 2022, was the one-time grant award of \$600,000 from Bezos Day 1 Families Fund. This one-time grant allows H.O.M.E. to prevent and end family homelessness through homeless family outreach, and production or acquisition of permanent supportive family housing.

Due to the lingering pandemic in 2022, we were limited in the number of in-person events that we were able to have. However, we successfully held our 3rd Annual Empty Bowls Fundraiser. We are grateful for the artists and community members that make this event a success. In 2022, we updated our website to improve communication with donors and our community. The updated site is live and provides a convenient way to donate to H.O.M.E.

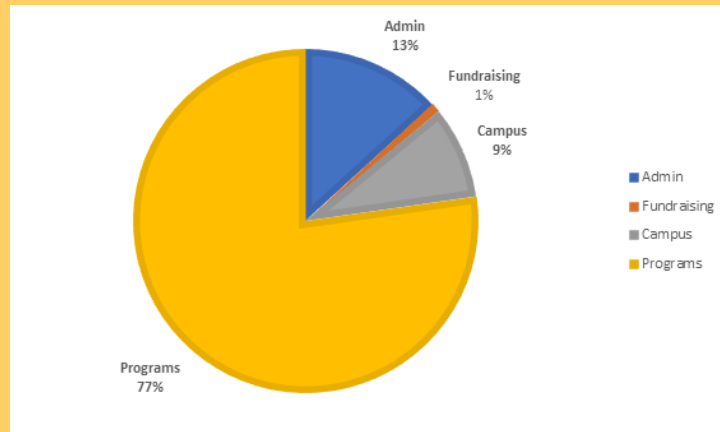
Finance Staff added a new member to its team and staff continued to successfully manage added revenue streams such as the one-time Bezos Day 1 Families Fund as well as private foundation grants supporting Diversion.

For the most recent audited financial statements, please visit our website at: [www.homemmausa.org](http://www.homemmausa.org).

## REVENUE STREAMS



## OPERATING EXPENSES



FINANCE



## Highlights from 2022/2023

# HIGHLIGHTS



**FUNDRAISING AND AWARDS** - We're proud that a group of leading experts in the field selected us as one of the 40 organizations nationwide to receive a 2022 Bezos Day 1 Families Fund grant! This game-changing \$600,000 contribution will help get us one step closer to ending family homelessness in our community! A huge thank you as well to the Next Generation Foundation for selecting H.O.M.E. as a recipient of the Evie Award in recognition of our advocacy for vulnerable people.



**DAYCARE** - Did you know H.O.M.E. has a licensed Daycare Center and Afterschool program? H.O.M.E.'s Childcare Director, Christina Witham, was selected to be on an advisory group that represents diverse voices in the field. In addition, Christina was also selected to present at a Child Abuse Prevention Webinar. She was selected based upon her prevention efforts in her work and her outstanding leadership.



**FIREWOOD BANK** - H.O.M.E.'s Wood Bank was awarded \$13,000 to purchase a wood splitter and items to help meet the heating needs of needy households. Modeled after food banks, firewood banks depend on wood donated by tree trimmers, towns, and homeowners to distribute to community members. There are more than 100 firewood banks around the country.



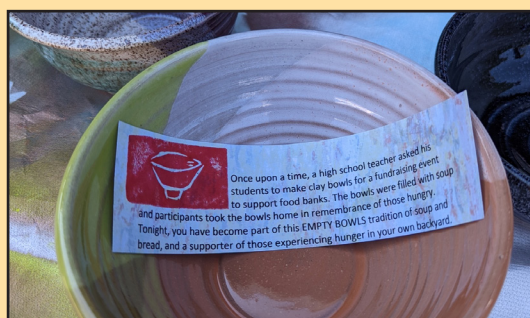
## Highlights from 2022/2023

### EXPANDING OUR SHELTER TEAM -

For the first time in H.O.M.E.'s history we will have 24/7 staffing patterns across all four shelters. H.O.M.E. performed minor renovations to reconfigure its current shelter spaces to achieve two goals. First, provide shelter space for families that responds more effectively to their needs, and second, lower the barrier in the adult shelters.



**EVENTS** - H.O.M.E.'s Third Annual Empty Bowls fundraiser was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who joined us. We started out with more than 160 handmade bowls and by the end of the night only 20 were left. Thank you to Edward's Kitchen in Bucksport for donating fresh artisan bread, and Darling's Ice-Cream for a Cause for rolling into our parking lot. Special thanks to George Rossi for his wonderful music and Rosalani Moore and Steve Weslow for their creative talents in making the bowls.



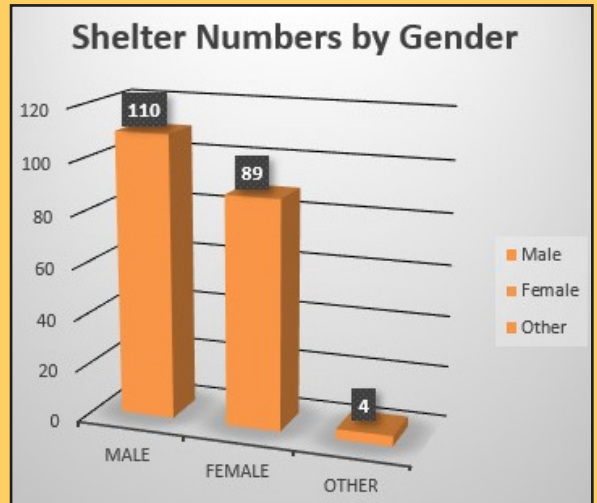
**HOMEOWNERSHIP** - Amy, her husband, and their three children came to H.O.M.E. seven years ago seeking shelter. After leaving shelter for an apartment, Amy was hired to work here and has trained to be a Housing Navigator. All the while Amy kept her eye on her dream to buy a home. One thing the pandemic has taught us is that humans are resilient and unstoppable when we unite to solve a common problem. Join us in congratulating Amy and her family!!!





# SHELTER

In 2022/23, H.O.M.E. developed a strategy to expand its shelter services to achieve two goals. First, provide shelter space for families that responds more effectively to their needs, and second, lower the barrier in the adult shelters. By reconfiguring the current shelter spaces and designating two shelters to serving families and two solely for single adults, we achieved both goals simultaneously. Our four shelters can now serve families with children, single fathers, single mothers and single or coupled adults with no children as well as all gender identities.

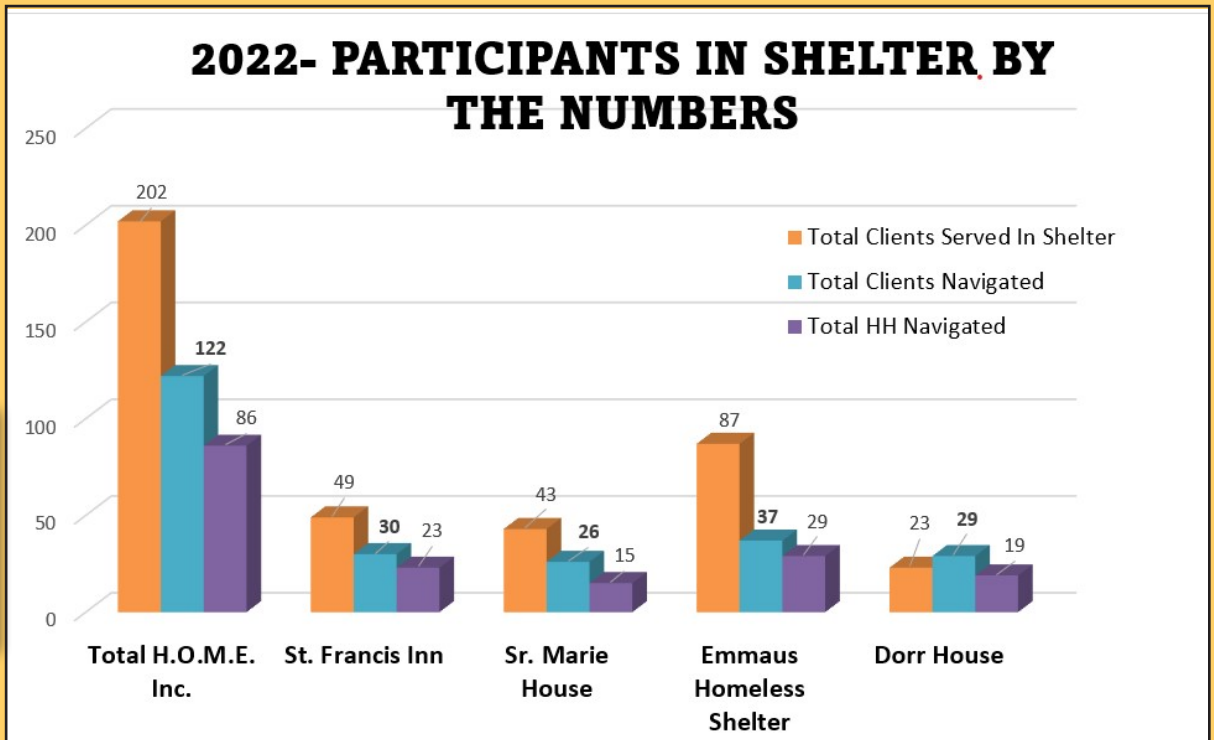


The shelters are back to full capacity coming out of Covid and continued to house 53 individuals through 2022. The year saw an increase of 25 households seeking shelter than the previous year. During the pandemic we shifted to a 24-hour staffing pattern across all four shelters and intend to keep staffing patterns at that level in perpetuity. Increasing staffing patterns provided opportunities for more positive interactions with guests experiencing the trauma of homelessness. A highlight of the program is the ability for H.O.M.E. to accommodate people with animals.

Over the past year, H.O.M.E. staff have redoubled its efforts in three priority areas: pushing State and Local governments to invest in the creation of affordable permanent housing at a scale to meet the vast level of need; ensuring that homeless families and individuals have access to decent, accessible, and appropriate shelter; and ensuring that unsheltered individuals are not criminalized and have access to shelters and supportive housing.

# SHELTER

18 households housed in H.O.M.E.'s Housing units.



**Total Number of Bed Nights provided in 2022 = 9780**



# FAMILY HOMELESS OUTREACH PROGRAM

New to H.O.M.E. is the Family Homeless Outreach Program. The Homeless Family Support Worker is a central contact within the organization to map and locate families who are experiencing homelessness, staying in cars, or tents. Mapping includes a coordinated effort with providers, RSU's and municipalities to locate families who are unsheltered.



The program aims to develop relationships linking people to resources and services to transition them from literal homelessness into housing compatible with their needs. The program links directly with Diversion and at the same time provides for people's most basic needs to ensure health and survival while they are experiencing homelessness. When a provider, neighbor, or community member discovers a family experiencing homelessness, the Homeless Family Support Worker immediately begins outreach to them so that families, where possible, can bypass shelters and go directly into housing.

## Year 2022 Shelter Stats

**50** Households Moved to permanent Housing.



**48** Individuals Diverted from Homelessness



**18** Households with Children Diverted from Homelessness



**9780** Bed Nights Provided



**202** Guests Sheltered

**52** Households with children Sheltered

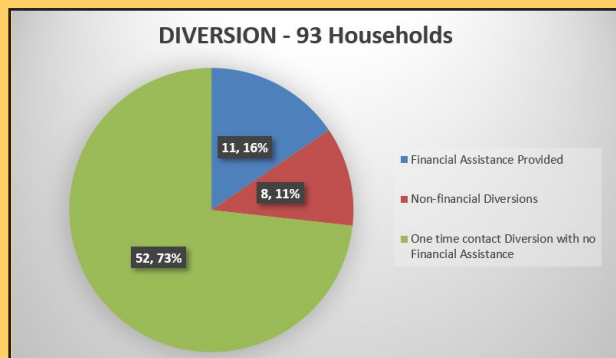
**Average Length of Stay**  
48 Nights

**Warming Center** Opened from December through April



## DIVERSION PILOT PROGRAM

A variety of circumstances can lead to a family becoming homeless. Sometimes, those situations can be addressed quickly and simply through the light-touch approach of Diversion. Diversion has been used successfully to help people identify alternatives to entering shelter and prevent them from becoming homeless. Now, many of the same elements of Diversion that help prevent homelessness are being used to help families exit homelessness. This extension of Diversion to families that are already experiencing homelessness carries great potential for the field - and for the families being served.



In 2022, the pilot program diverted 48 individuals, including 18 children. The program has continued into 2023 and we have recently received additional funding to greatly expand this service to reach households with children who are already experiencing homelessness.





# DAYCARE

H.O.M.E., Inc. Daycare had a slight growth in enrollment in 2022. We had sixteen children enrolled, which totaled nine families. Nine children are enrolled in our after-school program. Seven children are enrolled as full-time to part-time.

All nine families benefited from fresh produce in collaboration with Blue Angels. Blue Angels is a nonprofit organization that works with local farmers to give families with food instability fresh produce and bring awareness to hunger in Maine.



Trinity Episcopal Church in Castine financially supported our food program. Daycare provides breakfast, a morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack. They also financially supported Daycare’s Christmas party and supplied sixteen children with multiple presents. H.O.M.E. financially helped one family with our “In-House Subsidy” while they waited for their CCSP approval.

Professionally with daycare staff, we had some exciting opportunities take place. The Director of Daycare, Christina Witham continues to participate in an advocacy group with Maine NAEYC called LEAP. This is an advocacy group designated to help promote the attainment and retention of individuals to enter the

field of early education, and economic support for early childhood educators. They met with Senator Susan Collins, Senator Angus King, plus other politicians to help advocate for policy changes to support our fellow educators.

Christina also was recently selected to join the advisory board for GO NAPSACC. This is a nationally recognized organization promoting healthy eating, behaviors, and policy changes to improve the quality of care and continue educational opportunities for those working in the early education field. She is also finishing applying for her Maine Directors Credential with Maine Roads to Quality.



16 unduplicated enrollments - 1 subsidy provided.



## FOOD RESCUE

Food Rescue is the process of safely recovering excess food and distributing it to people in need. In the United States, up to 40% of the food we produce is wasted. Much of this food is perfectly good and healthy to consume. By redirecting that food to our neighbors in need, we are fighting hunger through food rescue.

### *How do we do it?*

We have a cargo van that picks up food seven days a week from Hannaford Supermarket in Bucksport and Ellsworth. We distribute this food through our food pantries.

We rescue and deliver more than 118,000 pounds of food each year to help feed our neighbors experiencing food insecurity.



### *What effect does food rescue have on the environment?*

With every pound of food H.O.M.E. redirects to a family that needs it, we are also working to reduce food waste, a key contributor to climate change. When food goes to a landfill, it produces methane gas - a greenhouse gas at least 28 times more

potent than carbon dioxide. Wasted food is the single biggest material placed in municipal landfills, according to the U.S. EPA. Municipal landfills are one of the biggest contributors of human-related methane in the country, accounting for more than 14% of all such emissions.

## FOOD PANTRY

In 2022, the Food Pantry distributed food boxes up to twice monthly to 1,976 individuals across 721 households. H.O.M.E.'s food distribution centers are located in Ellsworth and Orland and serve 16 towns and the City of Ellsworth. The year saw an increase of 67 households seeking assistance. Both food pantries provided one time Holiday Food Boxes which were sponsored by St. Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church in Blue Hill and Gil Tenney from Castine Unitarian Congregation. The Holiday Food Program reached 171 families or 618 individuals. Also, 73 families or 302 individuals were provided Christmas Food Boxes. We are grateful to our committed supporters for making this program a success.



# FOOD PANTRY

**118,180**  
lbs of food  
rescued and  
distributed  
at the daily  
produce  
line.



## CRAFTS

*“Art washes from the soul the dust of everyday life.”*

**The Pottery Studio** had 11 students in 2022 for a total of 108.75 hours. Potters Steve Weslow and Rosalani Moore worked tirelessly to create bowls for the Empty Bowls Fundraiser during the summer and created many different pottery items for the craft fairs and the Gift Shop.



**The Living Arts Studio** had many visitors. One volunteer, Sheila Holtz, donated over 269 hours to the studio. Her volunteer work included quilt making for the Shelter Quilt Project, creating items to be sold in the Gift Shop and at craft fairs, and tending to the flower beds that bring even more color to the outside of the studio. The Living Arts Studio artist, Julia Demaree, donated over 275 hours. Many of those hours were dedicated to the Shelter Quilt Project and talking with visitors who came to check out the studio and what it has to offer.



**The Stained Glass Studio** had one student in 2022 due to its' limited opening during the year. Stained glass artist, Roxanne Poulin, is in the studio every Tuesday and she puts a lot of imagination and talent into creating jewelry and stained glass items to be sold in our craft store and they are a big hit at craft fairs throughout the year.

## FIREWOOD BANK

Similar to H.O.M.E.'s two food banks, the wood bank provides free seasoned firewood to low-income families in our rural area. The Wood Bank helps address the problem of heat insecurity for many rural and low-income families who still rely on wood heat to keep warm. This winter the program processed firewood for 20 households. Early this year, H.O.M.E. received a grant to scale up the firewood bank to provide more coverage in our rural area.

20 families received assistance from the Wood Bank.





# VOLUNTEERS

H.O.M.E. has been slowly bringing our Volunteer Program back since the beginning of the pandemic. In 2022 we saw the return of the volunteer groups that have been helping H.O.M.E. for many summers. Some groups have been coming to H.O.M.E. longer than many of us employees have been here.

The 2022 Volunteer Season was dedicated to our beloved Market Stand which houses our food pantry and soup kitchen downstairs and our volunteer center upstairs.

The majority of volunteers worked on removing the old cedar shingles from the outside and applying fresh shingles from our own shingle mill in their place. The four groups managed to get about 75% of the outside shingled before the end of the summer. The remaining shingles will either be applied by our own crew or by the first few groups of the 2023 season.

The volunteer hours donated to H.O.M.E. by these groups and by individuals throughout the year totaled 2,231.75 hours. The in-kind donations of materials, tools, and other miscellaneous items totaled \$16,117. We could not do this work without our volunteer supports!



# VOLUNTEERS



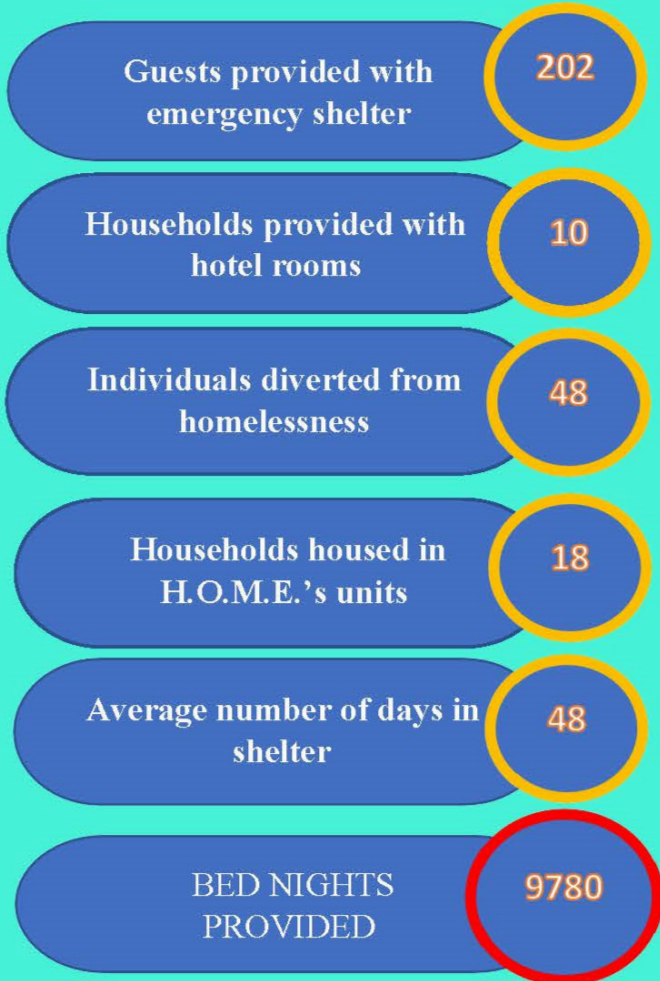
## *Other projects completed by volunteers...*

- The dismantling of the old bunk beds made of 2x4s in the Volunteer Center.
- The priming and painting of all the walls in the Volunteer Center.
- New flooring laid in the Volunteer Center.
- New steps made for an apartment at Hospitality House.
- Wood stacked.
- New trim on Market Stand installed. Some painted.
- Posts over culvert in Market Stand driveway created and installed.
- Food Pantry sign painted to freshen it up.
- New door in Volunteer Center installed.
- Fire escape at back of Volunteer Center built.
- Bathrooms in Volunteer Center completely remodeled.
- New treads installed on steps in Volunteer Center.
- New support post installed in Volunteer Center.
- Trim installed in bunk room of Volunteer Center.



# H.O.M.E. Inc. At-A-Glance 2022

## SHELTER AND HOUSING



## FOOD AND RESOURCES



## LOCAL STATISTICS

1 in 8 adults and 1 in 5 children, experience food insecurity.

37% of Mainers experiencing food insecurity do not qualify for public assistance.

Top causes of homelessness are lack of affordable housing and poverty.

70.4% of households in our area are not able to afford median area rent.





# It takes a village...

...and H.O.M.E. is happy to say our village is filled with generous and kind individuals and businesses. In 2022, pizza was donated for our shelter guests from Pat's Pizza in Ellsworth and Tozier's Family Market in Bucksport, Witham Family Hotels donated furniture to be used in our shelters and even sent a crew to help unload, socks were donated by Bombas to be distributed to anyone in need, and a quilting group from North Carolina sent beautifully made quilts for us to share. We are grateful for these donations and the many more that are too numerous to mention. We are thankful to know our village spreads far and wide. We are thankful for YOU!



# SUPPORTERS

**E. Rhodes and Leona B. CARPENTER FOUNDATION**  
 Diakoneint Foundation  
 WITHAM FAMILY HOTELS CHARITABLE FUND  
 Maine Community Foundation  
 Gerrish H Milliken Foundation

**MAINE REALTORS**  
 first church  
 Libra Foundation  
 Helen & George Ladd Charitable Corporation

The Day 1 Families Fund  
**Lojo Foundation**  
 The Winky Foundation  
 CONSTANCE SALTONSTALL Foundation for the Arts

**MEHAF** MAINE HEALTH ACCESS FOUNDATION  
**Darling's**  
**FRANCIS T & LOUISE T NICHOLS FOUNDATION**

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H.O.M.E., Inc. enhances the quality of life of people who have fallen on challenging times by honoring their dignity, attending to such basic needs as food and shelter, supporting their long-term health and development, and fostering a vibrant and mutually supportive community.



**H.O.M.E. INC. ENVISIONS A WORLD  
WHERE HOMELESSNESS AND  
POVERTY ARE UNDERSTOOD,  
ALLEVIATED, AND PREVENTED.**