

# Common Bond NM Emergency Project

## 2016 Annual Report

The Emergency Project plays a unique role within the AIDS support services network in New Mexico. Within 24 hours, we provide "last resort" financial assistance with the flexibility to meet a wide range of needs. For 28 years, the Emergency Project has helped prevent homelessness for low income New Mexicans living with HIV/AIDS. We provide up to \$200 for rent assistance or to help pay a deposit for a new housing situation when a client is forced to move due to a hostile or dangerous environment. Emergency Project payments also allow clients to maintain utilities without interruption and provide many other necessities of life.

During 2016, the Emergency Project disbursed \$33,596 to 151 male and 31 female clients who are Hispanic, Anglo, African-American, Native American, Native Hawaiian and Asian-American. We mailed 190 benefit checks – 84 for rent, 66 for utilities, and 12 for eyeglasses. We also assisted clients with medical bills, medicines, dental care, auto insurance, auto repair, E.R. and ambulance bills, and various other needs.

The Emergency Project serves not only the Albuquerque metro area but smaller New Mexico cities and rural communities as well. During 2016, 62 percent of requests came from Albuquerque. We also assisted clients living in Las Cruces, Santa Fe, Rio Rancho, Sandia Park, Tijeras, Corrales, Placitas, Peñasco, Los Lunas, Belen, Sunland Park, Espanola, Stanley, Anthony, Duran, Taos, Rancho de Taos, Roswell, Alamogordo, El Prado, Mesilla Park, Truth or Consequences, Pecos, Nambe, Bayard, Cuarteles, Valdez, and Silver City. During 2016 our swift, direct support again increased significantly. We assisted 51 more clients and disbursed over \$5,271 more aid compared to 2015.

We responded to case manager requests from these affiliated public health agencies:

- University of New Mexico Truman Health Services, Albuquerque
- First Nations Community HealthSource, Albuquerque
- Southwest CARE Center, Santa Fe
- Community Collaborative Care, Las Cruces
- Alianza of New Mexico, Roswell
- International AIDS Empowerment, El Paso (New Mexico clients only)

The Emergency Project was established during the "plague years" of the early AIDS crisis, when an HIV diagnosis invariably led to premature death. In the early days, clients were primarily gay and bisexual men living in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Over the years our client base has evolved along with the changing face of AIDS. During 2016, our clients ranged in age from 20 to 84 and included an increasing number of women.

Here are snapshots of five people we assisted last year as presented by their case managers:

- 57-year-old male: Patient has not worked for seven months and continues to seek employment. Patient has exhausted savings and assistance from family and friends.
- 32-year-old male: Medical bill incurred as a result of a violent “hate” crime that took place towards the end of last year. As a result the client was seen at ER in Albuquerque and incurred a total of \$1,437.00 for ER visit, CT scan of head/brain, as well as stitches. The client is living on a limited income that does not allow him to cover this expense.
- 36-year-old female: Client was recently very ill causing her to unexpectedly miss many days of work. She is requesting assistance with her gas bill so she can continue to have heat in her home.
- 42-year-old male: Client was hospitalized twice over the last six weeks. He has been unable to work and could not pay rent for February or March. Client has had a lot of medical appointments since he got out of the hospital and continues to be unable to work.
- 48-year-old female: Client is a triple-stroke victim living with her son on a housing voucher. She gets SSI and SSDI, as well as SNAP benefits, LIHEAP, and General Assistance. She is usually able to pay all of her bills, however this month she is short because she bought a new mattress. Her old one was falling apart and was very painful to sleep on.

The Emergency Project is operated in a low-key, direct, individual manner with a minimum of bureaucratic detail. For its first 20 years, it was managed by community activist Liz Canfield. Now age 94, Liz is still actively involved in decision-making. Steve Ridlon has been Director and administrator since October 2008. There is no overhead as both volunteers work from home and there are no paid employees. **One hundred percent of private donations and grant funds are disbursed to people in critical financial need.**

During 2016, the Emergency Project received a \$5,000 grant from Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, \$3,160 from special benefit performances of "Buyer & Cellar" produced by Robb Sisneros, \$300 from a UNMTHS fundraising event, plus \$7,503 in private donations.

The Emergency Project is a program of Common Bond New Mexico Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit; therefore, contributions are tax-deductible. **Your donation, payable to "Emergency Project," can be mailed to P.O. Box 8313, Albuquerque, NM 87198.**

**Thank you!**

For more information, please e-mail [EmergencyProjectNM@gmail.com](mailto:EmergencyProjectNM@gmail.com) or call (505) 934-7262.

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