



(formerly Montachusett Interfaith Hospitality Network, Inc. - MIHN)

2019 Annual Report



758 Main Street • Leominster, MA 01453
978-466-1704
www.northstarfs.org



Core Purpose

Providing transformative services to families.

.....

Mission Statement

Provide stable housing, comprehensive services and advocacy for families in need of support.

.....

Vision Statement

A bridge to independence that ensures stable living for all.

.....



Executive Director's Retrospective

North Star Friends,

The 2019 year proved to be a very busy and challenging year. The agency was able to assist twenty-three homeless families in building a stronger foundation in their pursuit of permanent housing. A significant number of our families mastered action steps towards self-sufficiency this year. A lack of housing inventory, stringent, landlord background checks and prior evictions have proved to be formidable barriers in obtaining apartments for our families in our community.

The Board of Directors, volunteers and staff engaged in a process to change the agency name from Montachusett Interfaith Hospitality Network, Inc. to North Star Family Services, Inc. On October 24th, 2019 we celebrated our new name at our "Guiding Light Gathering". Bonnie Hathaway, our Founder, reflected on our history and accomplishments throughout the years, while Adam Weber, our Board President and I spoke about future initiatives.

Our 758 North Star location was fortunate this year when Copernicus Power made the generous decision to donate a massive solar array to the shelter. Nathan Vignola, CEO and his team facilitated the panel install, electrical wiring and connection to the National Grid utility. It is estimated that 95% of our electric power will be generated by the sun for our shelter and administrative offices.

North Star has made the decision to explore and pursue supportive, permanent housing within our continuum. We have hired a housing development consultant and identified land in which to build an affordable housing complex. This would be a several year process where several due diligence assessments, partnerships, fundraising events and DHCD grant proposals would take place.

North Star would not be possible without the amazing level of support that we receive from our volunteers, donors, grantors, business leaders and dedicated staff. The collective team is what makes North Star function and thrive. I thank you for giving and for caring.

Sincerely,



Jon Hogue, Ed.D
Executive Director
North Star Family Services, Inc.



Adam Weber
Board President
North Star Family Services, Inc.

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Executive Director

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Operations Manager

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Case Manager

Raymond Pfeifle
House Manager

Paula Jarvenpaa
House Manager II

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First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church

Saint Leo Parish

NewLife Church

Leominster United Methodist Church

Saint Boniface Parish

Saint Anthony de Padua

Saint Cecilia Parish

Leominster Seventh-day Adventist Church

Excel Church

United Parish of Lunenburg

**Leominster Spanish Seventh-day
Adventist Church**

Lunenburg Turkey Hill Family Lions Club *

New Hope Community Church *

City United Church *

*new rotational group in 2019



Bonnie Hathaway
Founder

Updated Shelter Programming

Epic Wellness - Certified Yoga Instruction

Monalisa Dupiton volunteers her time by conducting certified yoga instruction to our families using stretching, yoga poses, relaxation and yoga bands.



Monalisa Dupiton

Clarisse Youmell & Ruby – affiliated with Tufts University - Paws for People Program

Clarisse brings Ruby to visit with our families. Ruby is a mild mannered, loving Malamute-Husky-German Shepherd mix. She was rescued from being a homeless stray from Oklahoma.



Clarisse Youmell
& Ruby

Budgeting / Saving Accountability Program

North Star works diligently with each family to set them up for success in the future with regard to financial and money management. Each family builds a weekly family budget that builds in all sources of income and all anticipated expenses. Education is offered regarding spending choices, "wants versus needs" and strategies to raise credit scores. Every week North Star models a line by line review of checking accounts, atm debits and income deposits to identify positive and negative patterns of spending and saving behavior.



Responses to the question . . .

What makes the North Star shelter special to you ?

**"They have bunk
beds and I can
touch the ceiling"**

(Former child)

**"Dedicated and
caring Staff"**

(Board member)

**"They cared
about safety and
helped my family
get back on
track"**

(Former family)

**"Dedicated
Volunteers"**

(Board member)

**"Resilience of
staff to develop
funding streams"**

(Rotation Group
Coordinator)

**"Respectful of
families"**

(Former family)

**"Intense
Case
Management"**

(Former family)

A North Star Success Story



In 2019, I had the opportunity to be able to shelter at the North Star Family Services shelter due to a personal struggle. I never knew I was in such a deep and uncomfortable situation like I was before entering North Star Family Services.

It was a very long seven months for my children and I to be here every day. I never lost hope. Patiently I waited for the big day to come which was to move into our apartment and we finally got it. Our new start for me and the kids after being without a home for a long 15 months.

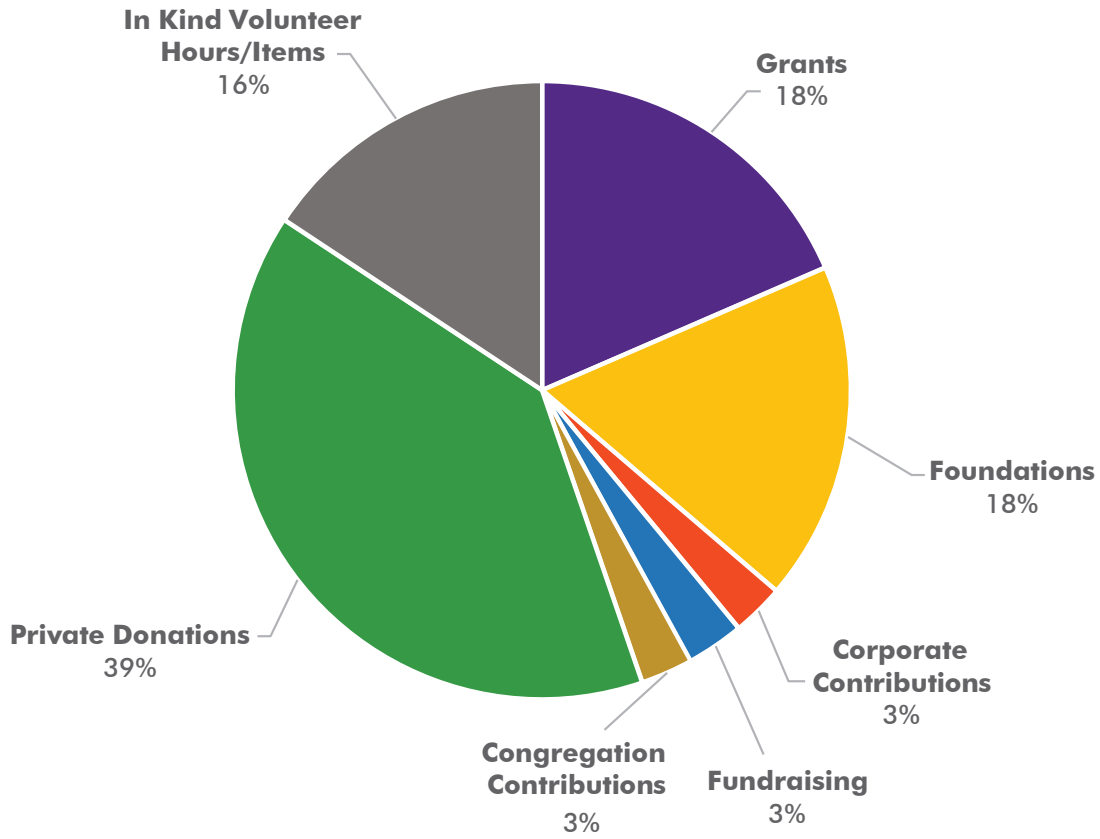
I am happy to say that we are in our new home and things continue to get better. I had the opportunity to get a newer and better vehicle for me and the kids.

I have always been a thankful person for what I have. I'm very thankful for all and I appreciate deep down inside and want to thank Jon as well as Tabitha and Karen and everyone else who was very supportive to me and my children in many different ways. They were there when I most needed their help in many ways during our darkest days. Thank you all once again for all your help.

Thank you.

Mary, Mark, Kathy and James

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The North Star agency and families we serve are blessed by all of our caring Donors, Volunteers, Board Members and Staff. THANK YOU !



If interested in making a donation please go to: northstarfs.org

