



Almost Home Program - East Orange, NJ

Scattered-Site Permanent Housing for Young Adults

The Almost Home Program

Opened in 2003, Urban Youth Development Corporation's Almost Home Program provides housing within master-leased, scattered-site, shared apartments for 22 young adults.

Sponsor, Service Provider, and Property Manager:

Urban Youth Development Corporation

Targeted Tenancy:

Young adults, ages 18-27, with a history of foster care placements and current homelessness.

Service Approach and Philosophy:

UYDC believes in programs for youth and young adults that are developmentally focused and that include a comprehensive approach that focuses on participants' ideas, families, schools, and the community. Their programs foster healthy lifestyles with opportunities for participants to learn new skills. The agency strives to support programs that make a substantial impact on communities, families, and children.

Key Features and Innovations:

- UYDC is developing a full housing continuum for young adults that will eventually consist of scattered-site, low service need apartments; single-site, more intensive service need apartments; and their existing Randall House, a multi-family building that provides supportive housing to seven young adult males.
- Case Management staff provide access and assistance with a wide variety of employment, educational, and social services that are available throughout the county.
- Focus on educational and employment resources, maintaining employment, and increasing income over time
- Participants receive a commitment of up to 5 years of rental subsidy for permanent housing with the goal of providing the participants with an opportunity to learn how to survive on their own, so that at the end of the five-year period, they will no longer be dependent.

Financing Information:

Operating:

Per Unit Operating Cost: \$9,600 per year
Operating subsidy provided through HUD's Shelter Plus Care Program

Services:

Per Unit Services Cost: \$9,600 per year
Services funding provided through HUD's Supportive Housing Program

Staffing Information:

- One Part-Time Employment Counselor
- One Part-Time Recreation Specialist
- One Communities Reentry Specialist (working with young adults and their families and larger communities)
- One Full-Time Case Manager

Additional Project Details

About Urban Youth Development Corporation:

Urban Youth Development Corporation (UYDC) is a minority-led community based service organization, focused on addressing the issues confronting the youth and young adults of Essex County, New Jersey. UYDC provides training and technical assistance to programs for youth and young adults that are developmentally focused and include a comprehensive approach that focuses on participant's ideas, families, schools and the community. Their programs foster healthy lifestyles with opportunities for participants to learn new skills. The agency strives to support programs that make a substantial impact on communities, families and children.

Building Design and Amenities:

Project utilizes scattered-site apartments in four cities in urban Essex County. The apartments accommodate a single individual, a parenting adult, a sister and brother or other family compositions. Most of the apartments are one-bedroom, but the program has a few studios, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom units.

Referral Sources:

Referrals provided by Covenant House, the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), hospitals and clinics, and by word of mouth.

Significant Building Rules:

UYDC utilizes a behavior-focused approach to substance use, focusing not on the use itself, but on the behaviors of the young adults and whether or not they are being "good neighbors" and meeting their Life Plan goals. Young adults may be evicted for fires, drug sales, or for "non-activity" (not engaged in employment, education or life goals).

Evaluation and Quality Assurance Methods:

Annually a quality assurance tool is used to assess the agency. A satisfaction questionnaire is given to participants on an annual basis, at minimum. Staff have an annual assessment. Supervisory staff evaluate staff daily.

Program Outcomes:

UYDC's goals for the program tenants include:

- Self-sufficiency within five years of entering the program, characterized by being able to financially take over the lease at the end of five years.
- A "Life Plan" is developed with a focus on education and employment interim goals that will allow tenants to reach the five-year goal of being able to pay the rent in full on their own.

About CSH:

The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) is a national, nonprofit organization that helps communities create permanent housing with services to prevent and end homelessness. CSH advances its mission by providing high-quality advice and development expertise, by making loans and grants to supportive housing sponsors, by strengthening the supportive housing industry, and by reforming public policy to make it easier to create and operate supportive housing. CSH delivers its core services primarily in nine states (California, Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island) and in Washington, DC. CSH also operates targeted initiatives in 6 states (Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Oregon, and Washington) and provides limited assistance to many other communities.

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