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/'karita:s/ (noun) love of humankind, charity

INSIDE:

PAGE 3

Providing Help to
Any Who Need it

• *Assistance League*

PAGE 7

Helping Victims
and Finding a Cure

• *Leukemia & Lymphoma Society*

PAGE 12

Coordinating Utah's
Homelessness Efforts

• *Shelter the Homeless*



Volume 4 Issue 1

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Operation School Bell is the largest program operated by Assistance League of Salt Lake City. Currently operating in six school districts in the Salt Lake Valley, Operation School Bell distributes brand-new clothing and winter coats to children in need. Each bag contains a winter coat, a pair of jeans, two shirts, a sweat-shirt, a package of socks, a package of underwear, a toothbrush and toothpaste. Photo courtesy of Assistance League of Salt Lake City.

“WE’RE AN ALL-VOLUNTEER, COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAM DEDICATING TO HELPING PEOPLE - AND WE KNOW THE PEOPLE WE HELP.”

When people ask what the Assistance League of Salt Lake City does, Valerie Mercer, who serves as the organization’s volunteer communications chair, usually answers their question with another question — or two or three.

“I usually start by saying, ‘When you got dressed this morning, were you worried about your appearance? Did you feel prepared to face what you had to face?’” Mercer said. “Or I ask them, ‘Do you know what happens to a victim’s clothes when she makes a report of sexual assault?’ or, ‘Did you know that there are kids going to school every day without underwear?’ And then the answer is simple. We’re an all-volunteer, community-based program dedicating to helping people, and we know the people we help.”

The Assistance League of Salt Lake City is a chapter of the national organization and it has been operating in the state since 1977. Members pay dues, some of which are passed through to the national organization and some of which the local chapter keeps. Each of the questions Mercer asks people who are interested in what Assistance League does corresponds to a program the organization funds and executes. In fiscal year 2018, Assistance League of Salt Lake City

had an operating budget of just under \$1 million.

The majority of the organization’s operating budget — 65 percent — comes from the proceeds of a thrift shop Assistance League operates at 2090 E. 3300 S. in Salt Lake City. Last year, the thrift shop brought in nearly \$600,000.

The store accepts donations of gently used clothing, accessories, books and household items. And sometimes, Mercer said, they hit real pay dirt with large donations from estates or small retailers going out of business. For example, the thrift shop was recently approached by a man who had purchased the entire inventory of an antiques store that was closing. He had intended to sell the items on eBay, Mercer said, but it turned out to be more time-consuming than he thought it would be.

“He looked around to see where he could sell this stuff for the best price and do the most good with that money, and he chose us,” she said.

The man donated the entire inventory to the Assistance League and they brought in an appraiser to help price the collection. A three-day vintage sale focused on the donated items brought in enough money to increase the budget for several Assistance League programs that year.

“People were waiting around the side of the building!” Mercer said.

Additional revenue comes from grants and donations (22.5 percent), special events and fundraisers (9.4 percent) and membership dues (2 percent). According to Judy Hale, assistant treasurer of the Assistance League of Salt Lake City and a member of the national finance committee, 86 cents

of every dollar the Salt Lake City chapter raises or earns goes straight back into the programs the chapter operates. The chapter pays some overhead expenses for office and retail space and marketing, but there are no paid staff members.

CONTINUED on page 4



Assistance League of Salt Lake City operates a thrift shop at 2090 E. 3300 S. that sells gently used clothing, accessories, books and household items. The shop is staffed entirely by volunteers. Last year it brought in \$600,000, which represented 65 percent of the organization’s total operating budget. Photo courtesy of Assistance League of Salt Lake City.

FROM page 3

“If people want to see how their money is spent, we are totally transparent,” Hale said.

As for what kinds of programs Assistance League of Salt Lake City operates, that depends on what needs the community has. And that can change over time, so programs adapt as well.

“It’s really kind of grassroots,” Mercer said, stressing that the national organization doesn’t dictate what programs each chapter develops. “Chapters are dedicated to determining what service is needed most in the community.”

The largest program funded and operated by the Assistance League of Salt Lake City is called Operation School Bell. Currently operating in six school districts in the Salt Lake Valley, Operation School Bell distributes brand-new clothing and winter coats to children in need. At the beginning of each school year, counselors and teachers at participating schools identify students in need of assistance from the program. The parents or guardians of the students provide sizing information and Assistance League volunteers buy and bag the items. Each bag contains a winter coat, a pair of jeans, two shirts, a sweatshirt, a package of socks, a package of underwear, a toothbrush and toothpaste.

Last year Operation School Bell distributed nearly 5,000 bags of clothes on a budget of \$370,000.

Volunteers, beyond just members of the Assistance League, are cru-

cial to the success of all Assistance League programs, Mercer said. In calendar year 2018-2019, volunteers logged 33,000 hours supporting various efforts. For Operation School Bell, church groups, corporate volunteer groups and others start sorting and bagging clothes in early September so the bags can be distributed by Thanksgiving. And while they are contributing to the success of the program, they are also getting valuable exposure to the needs of families in the community, Mercer said.

“There are many heartwarming stories that come out of these experiences,” she said.

One volunteer came back from distributing bags at a local school and recounted that a lot of the children were most excited to see a toothbrush in their bag. When the volunteer asked why that was the thing they were happiest about, she discovered many of them had been sharing toothbrushes with their siblings. Another volunteer said a boy refused the bag that was offered to him because, he said, his grandmother couldn’t afford it. When the volunteer told him the bag was free, the boy started to cry.

“The kid is happy to receive this bag,” Mercer said, “but the whole family is actually relieved.”

Meeting these specific and immediate needs that often go unaddressed is at the core of every program Assistance League of Salt Lake City operates.

Operation Healthy Teeth provides free urgent dental care to kids from pre-K through high school with no dental insurance or other coverage. Partner dentists contribute between

20 percent and 50 percent of the cost of the required procedures — up to \$1,200 per child — and the Assistance League covers the rest.

The budget for Operation Healthy Teeth was \$200,000 last year, up from \$150,000 the year before.

Through the Assault Survivor Kit program, the Assistance League provides clothing, underwear and personal hygiene products to survivors of sexual assault whose own clothing and personal items are often taken by law enforcement officials as evidence. Each year, more than 600 kits are provided to Salt Lake City’s Rape Crisis Center and the YCC Family Crisis Center in Ogden to be distributed to survivors.

Through the Baby Bundles program, mothers in need are provided with blankets, clothing, diapers and other essentials for their newborns before they leave the hospital. The program reaches nearly 1,300 newborns a year.

Both the Assault Survivor Kit and the Baby Bundles programs are operated by an auxiliary of Assistance League of Salt Lake City called the Consociates. Geared towards mothers of small children and working women who can’t attend meetings during the day, the Consociates meet once a month in the evening to share a meal and plan and execute philanthropic programs.

The Assistance League of Salt Lake City also has an auxiliary for teenagers in grades 8-12, called Assisteens. Members of Assisteens

CONTINUED next page



Assisteens is the Assistance League’s auxiliary for teenagers. Assisteens help with Assistance League programs as well as executing their own programs and volunteer opportunities such as serving meals at local homeless shelters, delivering Easter baskets to families in transitional housing, and putting on events at retirement centers and nursing homes. Photo courtesy of Assistance League of Salt Lake City.



**Program Impact
2018-2019**

5,000+

kids in need received new, warm winter clothing from Operation School Bell

217

kids received urgent dental treatment through Operation Healthy Teeth’s dentist partners

1,400

seniors in care facilities enjoyed musical performances

1,758

Head Start students in 71 classrooms received a book of their own from the Assistance League Book Bank

195

men and women re-entering the workforce received clothing from the Assistance League Thrift Shop

1,100

newborns in need received a layette through the Baby Bundles program

620

survivors of sexual assault received an Assault Survivor Kit

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FROM previous page

volunteer at the thrift shop, help with programs like Operation School Bell and also execute their own programs as well. Examples include serving meals at local homeless shelters, delivering Easter baskets to families in transitional housing and putting on events at retirement centers and nursing homes.

“That is one of the programs the kids love the most,” Mercer said.

In addition to providing revenue to fund programs, the Assistance League Thrift Shop also supports community programs through a partnership called Brighter Tomorrows. Agencies working on employment readiness and training can refer their clients to the thrift shop where they receive a \$40 credit to spend on work-appropriate clothing. Individuals referred through the program also get a bag with some essential personal hygiene products and a gift certificate for a haircut. “Some of the clients cry while they pick out their clothes, out of sheer gratitude and relief,” Hale said.

“We have a compelling story to tell,” she said, “and we try to serve people that other organizations don’t serve.”

Corporate donors and partners are a key part of the Assistance League’s story as well. Without volunteers and donations, many of the programs would shrink in size or disappear altogether.

And just as corporate partners can

find a program within the Assistance League that fits their mission or passion, members can do the same. For example, when Mercer first joined the Assistance League as a young mother in Las Vegas, what she was most look-

ing for was just making friends.

“I probably, way back when, had more interest in meeting other women than in the programs,” she said, “but I knew I didn’t just want to meet women playing cards. With the Assistance

League, you get great hands-on experience serving other people, you meet people who are engaged in the same way you are, and you can invest your time and energy in opportunities that really matter and make a difference.”



Last year, Assistance League of Salt Lake City’s Operation School Bell program distributed 5,000 bags of clothing to children in need. Clothes are purchased at discounted prices over the summer and stored at the Assistance League warehouse until the bags are distributed in the early fall. Photo courtesy of Assistance League of Salt Lake City.



Operation Healthy Teeth provides free urgent dental care to kids from pre-K through high school with no dental insurance or other coverage. Partner dentists contribute between 20 percent and 50 percent of the cost of the required procedures, up to \$1,200 per child, and the Assistance League covers the rest. Photo courtesy of Assistance League of Salt Lake City.



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LEUKEMIA & LYMPHOMA SOCIETY®

UTAH CHAPTER

Finding a cure for blood cancers is front and center in the work the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society does



Cancer doesn't just impact patients, it impacts families and caregivers as well. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society has programs and events to support families and caregivers during the cancer journey, including opportunities to meet one-on-one with cancer experts to ask questions about treatment and outcomes. Photo courtesy of the Utah Chapter of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

Every three seconds, someone in the United States is diagnosed with a blood cancer. In 2018, 1,260 people living in Utah were diagnosed with a blood cancer such as leukemia, lymphoma or myeloma — and 9,300 Utahns were receiving treatment or were in remission from a blood cancer.

Bob Farrell was one of them.

Eleven years ago, Farrell visited his doctor for a routine medical procedure and left with a diagnosis of Non-Hodgkins lymphoma — and a whole lot more questions than answers.

“When I was first diagnosed, all I could do was wonder, ‘What’s going on? And what does this mean?’” Farrell said.

Soon after his diagnosis, he was visited in the hospital by a representative of the Utah Chapter of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS), who told him about a program called First Connection. Through First Connection, Farrell would be paired with a peer — someone close to his

own age who had the same cancer diagnosis but was a few years ahead in their journey of treatment and recovery. Farrell was paired up with a man named Tom who lived in Boston.

“Tom and I talked for 10 or 15 minutes,” Farrell said, “and it changed

doing with his time. Tom said he was training for a marathon.

“I get kind of emotional even now talking about it,” Farrell said. “That really gave me the hope I needed. I knew I would be OK.”

Giving patients, families and care-

givers to improve the quality of life for patients and their families,” said Stacie Kulp, executive director of the Utah Chapter of LLS. “We have one goal and that is a world without cancer.”

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society was founded 70 years ago, born out of one family’s desire to find hope after their teenage son died suddenly from leukemia, which was at that time considered 100 percent fatal.

Finding a cure for blood cancers is front and center in the work LLS does. Since its inception in 1949, the organization has invested nearly \$1.3 billion in blood cancer research worldwide. The organization is currently funding a research grant at the University of Utah worth \$550,000 and has invested more than \$7.6 million at the Huntsman Cancer Institute.

The organization is currently funding a research grant at the University of Utah worth \$550,000 and has invested more than \$7.6 million at the Huntsman Cancer Institute

my life. It gave me something to hold on to.”

Tom talked about his own diagnosis and the treatment options he had explored. Then Farrell asked, now that he was in remission, what was he

givers that hope — hope in a healthy life and hope in a cure — is the driving mission of LLS, the largest non-profit in the world dedicated to fighting blood cancer.

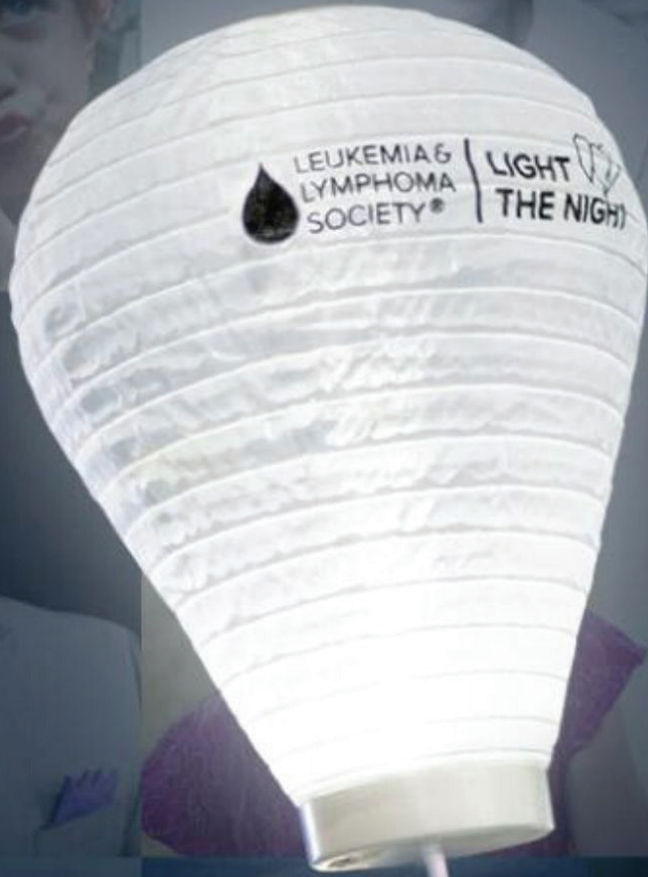
“Our mission is to cure blood can-

CONTINUED on page 9



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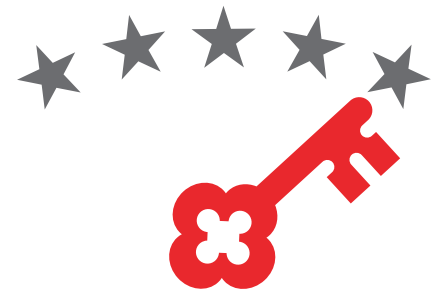
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FROM page 7

“Our biggest focus is funding brilliant minds — the best of the best — when it comes to people who are working to cure cancer,” Kulp said. “I’m really proud that we have a lot going on right here in our community.”

The Utah Chapter — and all local chapters — raise money through corporate and individual donations, as well as fundraising events. All the money raised goes to the national organization and is then divided among the chapters according to their specific needs.

“These are all funds that we are able to raise in our communities around the country,” Kulp said.

The chapter’s largest fundrais-

ing event, Light the Night, takes place every October. Many local corporations, including KeyBank, U.S. Translations, Intermountain Healthcare, the Huntsman Cancer Institute, Utah Media Group and Dominion Energy are sponsors and donors.

The mission of LLS is one that’s easy for companies to get behind, Kulp said. Cancer impacts everyone, she said, and it is going to take everyone working together to cure it. Companies that focus on corporate responsibility are doing themselves a favor — their employees are happier and more engaged and they experience less turnover — but they are also doing their communities a favor.

LLS sponsors and donors can very easily see the direct and measurable impacts of their efforts and money, Kulp said. For example, of the 53

treatments for blood cancer approved by the Food and Drug Administration since 2017, 46 were the result of research funded by LLS. And since the 1990s, there has been a 32 percent decline in blood cancer deaths.

“We’ve made incredible advancements in the past 70 years,” Kulp said, and that progress has positive implications for all cancer patients, not just blood cancer patients. Because it is easier to develop treatments for cancer cells in a liquid like blood, rather than in a solid form like a tumor, blood cancer treatment often leads the way and can then be applied to solid tumor cancers such as bone, brain, prostate and ovarian cancer.

“We’re really kind of the tip of the spear when it comes to curing cancer,” Kulp said. “We are going to fund the researchers that are going to get us all to a cure the fastest.”

And for all cancers, especially blood cancers, a cure is critical. Blood cancers can’t be prevented by lifestyle changes or choices, Kulp said, and there are no tests for early detection of blood cancers, either. Most patients receive their diagnosis as the result of treating a separate issue, the way Farrell did. And yet, blood cancers are extremely common. Leukemia remains the No. 1 cancer diagnosis in children under 18, Kulp said.

“Really what LLS does is provide hope and guidance, education and support throughout the cancer journey,” she said.

There is never a good time to receive a cancer diagnosis, she added, but there has never been a better time than now to be fighting cancer. To illustrate her point, Kulp shared the experience of Ali, a 9-year-old girl from Brigham City.

The youngest of six children, Ali was diagnosed at the age of 4 with a form of pediatric leukemia. She is now battling her fifth recurrence of the cancer. But, every time her cancer has come back there has been a new treatment available to fight it, Kulp said. This time around, Ali is receiving her third round of an immunotherapy treatment that trains white blood cells to recognize and attack cancer cells.

“The treatment has gotten better each time, and her family has hope because there are constantly new options available to her,” Kulp said.

And those options will keep coming. LLS has just pledged \$100 million over the next five years specifically for fighting pediatric cancer.

The second piece of the LLS mission is supporting patients and families as they face their diagnosis and move forward with treatment. Sometimes that support is financial — each of Ali’s treatments, for example, cost \$400,000. The cost of cancer treatment is the No.1 reason people in the United States file for bankruptcy, Kulp said.

Last year the Utah Chapter distributed \$466,000 in co-pay assistance to 167 patients, \$5,900 in patient aid to 59 patients, \$18,500 in urgent need to 37 patients and \$8,000 in travel assistance to 16 patients — all in the state.

The First Connection program that Farrell participated in is another example of the support and education LLS provides. The Utah Chapter also hosts Meet the Expert events where patients and families can get one-on-one time with a medical provider who is an expert in their diagnosis to ask any questions they have.

“That’s a really priceless opportu-



Each local chapter of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society raises money through various events such as Light the Night, held in Utah every October. All the funds raised by each chapter are rolled up to the national organization and then distributed to the local chapters. Photo courtesy of the Utah Chapter of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

FROM page 9

nity,” Kulp said.

The local chapter also hosts seminars and survivorship workshops at local hospitals, while the national organization provides webinars and other online learning opportunities to reach patients and families in remote areas.

If she had all the funding in the world, Kulp said, she would direct the bulk of it to making sure every person with a diagnosis of blood cancer knew about the support and services LLS provides.

“The hardest thing I hear is that, when someone has gone through their entire cancer journey or they’ve lost someone to cancer, and they say, ‘I wish I had known about you,’” Kulp said.

The Utah Chapter and the national organization also have an advocacy arm that tracks bills and lobbies for legislations that supports cancer research and equal access to treatment. For example, LLS volunteer advocates sent more than 8,400 letters in support of the Cancer Drug Parity Act, introduced in Congress to



Money raised by events such as Light the Night go to supporting cutting-edge cancer research. The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society has invested nearly \$1.3 billion in blood cancer research worldwide. The organization is currently funding a research grant at the University of Utah worth \$550,000, and has invested more than \$7.6 million at the Huntsman Cancer Institute.



A major part of the mission of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society is to provide hope and guidance to patients, families, and caregivers during their cancer journey. One program, called First Connections, matches recently diagnosed patients with peer mentors in recovery from the same cancer. Photo courtesy of the Utah Chapter of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

ensure access to all cancer treatments regardless of how they are administered.

“Our focus when it comes to advocacy is to support anything that is going to accelerate treatment and improve access,” Kulp said.

Volunteers — such as the letter writers — are absolutely key to the national organization and the local chapters, according to Kulp. The Utah Chapter operates with just six full-time staff members and one part-time staffer. Volunteers take care of the bulk of the work the chapter does, including putting on the major fundraising events.

“I think people are always amazed with how much we are able to accomplish with a small team,” Kulp said.

With his own cancer now in remission, Farrell is one of those volunteers. He is a First Connection mentor, helps run outreach events at local hospitals and serves on the board of trustees of the Utah Chapter.

“All the services that I’ve taken advantage of, I like to be a liaison to get people in touch with all the LLS services that can help them,” Farrell said. “The thing that makes me most proud to work with LLS is that they are truly invested in using the money they get to find a cure for cancer. The miracles that happen — it makes you very proud.”



2019 Local Impact

- Reached 184 new households
- Completed 11 First Connection matches
- Over 57 patients, caregivers and healthcare professionals attended a local education program in their community

Utah Chapter Financial Assistance


- \$466,000 in co-pay assistance to 167 patients
- \$5,900 in patient aid to 59 patients
- \$18,500 in urgent need to 37 patients
- \$8,000 in travel assistance to 16 patients
- \$550,000 invested in lifesaving research at the University of Utah

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society: National Impact (2019)

- \$1.3 billion invested in cutting-edge cancer research since 1949
- Helped advance 46 of the 53 blood cancer treatments approved by the FDA since 2017
- More than \$431 million provided in co-pay financial assistance since 2007
- Nearly 20,000 inquiries from patients and caregivers answered by LLS information specialists last year
- More than 600,000 educational booklets about specific diseases distributed last year



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The new Homeless Resource Centers have many essential services on-site, including food, health-care and case management services. Transportation options are also provided for residents who need to travel to receive additional services.

Photo courtesy of Shelter the Homeless

shelter the HOMELESS

Organization created to provide reliable infrastructure for homeless services, regardless of what form the delivery takes

Homelessness — and how to address it — has been a hot topic of conversation in Salt Lake City over the past few years. As some people felt the downtown area, known as the Rio Grande District located near The Road Home shelter, had become a breeding ground for drugs and crime, others felt that the city, state and other related agencies weren't dedicating enough resources to addressing the root of the problem rather than trying to mask its symptoms.

The solution was a law enforcement crackdown, called Operation Rio Grande, and an evolution in the homeless services delivery model in Salt Lake, transitioning from centralized shelter and services downtown to a dispersed delivery model with Homeless Resource Centers (HRCs) located around the valley. In the midst of all that change, however, there has been one constant: the nonprofit organization Shelter the Homeless.

Shelter the Homeless was created in 1988 to provide a stable and reliable infrastructure for homeless services in Salt Lake, regardless of who is in charge of delivering them and regardless of what form that delivery takes. Shelter the Homeless purchases all the land where homeless shelters and resource centers are built and then contracts with the appropriate community partners and organizations to staff and run the centers.

"We are essentially an asset-holding nonprofit," said Preston Cochrane, executive director of Shelter the Homeless.

Under the new resource center model, Shelter the Homeless acquired land for three new centers, each

designed for specific segments of the homeless population:

- The Homeless Resource Center at 3380 S. 1000 W. covers 77,461 square feet and accommodates 300 men. It is operated by The Road Home.

- The Gail Miller Resource Center, located at 242 W. Paramount Ave., covers 62,691 square feet and can accommodate up to 200 women and men. It is operated by Catholic Community Services of Utah.

- The Geraldine E. King Women's Resource center occupies 59,848 square feet at 131 E. 700 S. and houses up to 200 women. It is operated by Volunteers of America Utah.

This new resource model also includes an existing 300-bed family shelter in Midvale, also operated by The Road Home. The total capacity for the new network of Homeless Resource Centers is 700 beds.

In total, Shelter the Homeless raised \$64 million for construction of the three new facilities. Twenty-four percent of that total came from the state, with the rest coming from donors, including \$4 million from the King family, \$10 million from Gail Miller to cover services provided at the centers and \$10 million from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

One major benefit of the new Homeless Resource Center model is that all essential supportive services are self-contained within each center. Each HRC has food, medical care, case management services

"These are really places where people can receive transformational services."

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To address concerns about violence and drug use in the Rio Grande District of downtown Salt Lake City, the homeless service delivery model shifted to a distributed model, with Homeless Resource Centers such as the Geraldine E. King Women's Resource Center and the Gail Miller Resource Center (bottom of page) located throughout the Salt Lake Valley. Photo courtesy of Shelter the Homeless.

FROM previous page

and employment assistance provided on-site. Additional services, such as legal assistance, may also be provided on-site by community partners.

"These are really places where people can receive transformational services," Cochrane said.

And Cochrane added, people can get the services that are right for them. For example, thanks to on-site case management at the new resource centers, 30 percent of people seeking shelter have been diverted into stable housing instead, such as the 200 units of permanent supportive housing also managed by Shelter the Homeless.

Opening separate shelters for men and women has also yielded positive results, Cochrane said. Women experiencing homelessness who didn't feel safe seeking services in the old model have been much more open to the new resource centers.

"Being able to tailor our services accordingly serves those people much better," Cochrane said.

Another benefit of the Homeless Resource Center model has been to strengthen relationships between Shelter the Homeless and its community partners. As new, and sometimes unanticipated, roadblocks have come up, these community organizations have been key partners in developing innovative and cost-effective solutions.

One of those partners is

Intermountain Healthcare. The mission of Intermountain is closely aligned with the mission of Shelter the Homeless, said Mikelle Moore, senior vice president and chief community health officer.

"As a healthcare organization focused on helping people into the healthiest lifestyle possible, we know that having housing is foundational to guiding people into a healthy life for themselves and their families," Moore said.

In addition, as a large organization with a broad expertise, Intermountain has the resources and experience to support large-scale coordinated efforts, which the new distributed Homeless Resource Center model requires.

"We have leaders and systems and processes that have been useful to Shelter the Homeless," Moore said.

For example, as Shelter the Homeless was facilitating site selection for the new Homeless Resource Centers, several community partners raised concerns about access to healthcare services under the new model. While the old Road Home Shelter was adjacent to the Fourth Street Clinic, where individuals staying in the shelter could receive low-cost or cost-free healthcare services, the new distributed model would move people away from that resource.

"Intermountain Healthcare said, 'We care about this. Let's contribute some money to see if we can help solve this problem,'" Moore said.

The solution was a mobile health

unit that could travel among the different resource centers. A nurse case manager role was also created and staffed for each of the centers to track healthcare needs and ensure they are met. This solution is not only a benefit to the individuals staying in the shelters, Moore said, it also created benefits for Intermountain.

"What have we gotten out of it?" she said. "We have people in our ERs and in our clinics who now have community partners taking care of them out where they are, and out where they live."

Other corporate partners have something to gain from supporting the mission of Shelter the Homeless as well, Cochrane said.

"If you have affordable housing, your workforce is better, kids stay in schools, people don't move around so much," he said. "There are a lot of best practices associated with affordable housing."

While the new Homeless Resource Center model has been successful so far, it has also expanded the responsibilities of Shelter the Homeless beyond anything the organization has taken on before. For starters, the organization went from owning and managing two sites to four sites. In addition, they have taken on some new roles, including providing 24/7 private security at each of the Homeless Resource

CONTINUED on page 14



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FROM page 13

Centers, as well as providing meals at three of the new centers. After 30 years with no paid staff and a variable annual budget, Shelter the Homeless brought on four full-time employees to handle the new workload, and had an operating budget of \$500,000 last year.

“The breadth of what we are providing has grown,” Cochrane said. “It’s a historic reset of the way we provide services to people experiencing homelessness.”

Corporate partners have also been critical in helping to shoulder the new workload. While many companies think of giving money or sending volunteers as the best way to exercise corporate responsibility, for organizations like Shelter the Homeless, sometimes help with logistics and scale can be just as cru-

cial, Moore said.

“You really need to be willing to say, ‘We are your partner because we care about this issue’ and once you’ve made yourself available, those ways to help come,” she said.

For example, when a new seasonal emergency shelter opened in Sugarhouse a few months ago, Shelter the Homeless received large donations of blankets, but they had no way to launder them.

“We told Shelter the Homeless to call us with any problem and they called us with this problem,” Moore said. “I just called our laundry manager and he figured it out.” The Intermountain laundry service now picks up dirty blankets and delivers clean ones to the emergency shelter twice a week as part of its regular route.

“Probably the greatest gift that we gave them was, here was a problem that was really complicated for



Homeless Resource Centers are designed to be safe, self-contained places for individuals experiencing homelessness to receive shelter and critical services. Shelter the Homeless and its community partners have worked hard to ensure the centers are a welcome, seamless part of the surrounding neighborhoods and communities. Photo courtesy of Shelter the Homeless.



Each Homeless Resource Center has critical and essential services on-site, including commercial kitchens to provide healthy meals for residents at no cost to them. Photo courtesy of Shelter the Homeless.

them to solve but it was really easy for us to solve,” Moore said.

Though the immediate and most pressing logistical issues have been resolved and all the new Homeless Resource Centers are up and running, there is still plenty of work ahead for Shelter the Homeless and its community partners. For one thing, Shelter the Homeless continues to conduct community outreach and address concerns from some of the communities where the new Homeless Resource Centers are located.

“We want to make sure everyone who lives and works in these neighborhoods feels safe and secure and that any negative impacts on the community are being addressed,” Cochrane said.

Part of that outreach also includes educating the community on the complex causes of homelessness and how close it is to many people who think of it as something that only happens to other people. But with stagnant wages and skyrocketing rent, there has been an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness across the state. Shelters everywhere, not just in the Salt Lake Valley, are consistently operating at about 97 percent capacity.

“A lot of people are just a paycheck away from homelessness,” Cochrane said, “so chances are there are people in your circle of influence who are experiencing homelessness. They might be living in a car or couch-surfing. It could be a senior citizen on a fixed income whose rent went up. It could be a victim of domestic violence. It could be someone suffering from PTSD or substance abuse disorder. The issues that lead to homelessness are complex and there’s not a one-size-fits-all description of people experiencing homelessness. Our mission is to alleviate any human suffering, and that is what we’ll continue to do.”

Operation Rio Grande

Operation Rio Grande was launched August 14, 2017, with a three-phase plan to restore public safety in the Rio Grande District of Salt Lake City, after drug use and violence reached a tipping point in July 2017.

PHASE 1: PUBLIC SAFETY AND RESTORING ORDER is measured by comparing part one offenses (serious or frequent crimes) to a three-year average. In June 2019, part one crimes in the Rio Grande area were down 36 percent compared to the three-year average.

PHASE 2: ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT supports people struggling with mental illness and drug addiction so they can return to a path of self-reliance. From August 2017 to June 2019:

- 275 treatment beds have been added
- 244 behavioral health assessments have been completed
- 146 individuals have pled into the Drug Court program
- 444 sober living residential beds have been added
- 569 individuals were placed in sober living

PHASE 3: DIGNITY OF WORK prepares and connects individuals to income that supports housing. From November 2017 to June 2019:

- 233 individuals became employed
- 595 job seekers developed an employment plan

Funding for short-term and long-term housing supports have achieved the following from August 2017 to June 2019:

- 661 individuals diverted from emergency shelter to immediate alternate housing arrangements
- 185 individuals have been housed in long-term housing and 348 served in short-term housing

See the latest results at: operationriogrande.utah.gov



Home4Change

Home for Change is a \$10 million matching grant sponsored by the Larry H. and Gail Miller Family Foundation. For every dollar donated, the grant will match it up to \$10 million. What will the money buy?

\$10

One day of meals for an individual experiencing homelessness

\$25

A one night stay, for one person, at a Homeless Resource Center

\$50

GED prep and life skills training

\$250

Employment and job training

\$500

Medical care and oral hygiene for individuals experiencing homelessness

\$1,000

Addiction and substance use disorder treatment

To donate visit:

<https://homelessutah.org/home4change/>

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