



Interfaith  
Hospitality Network  
of Essex County, Inc.

*an affiliate of Family Promise®*

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019



# Directors Letter

Families are our lifeblood, and those who come to us for help have stories that can be heartbreaking to hear. At one point, they had a home, a job, and enough resources to feed and clothe their children and keep them safe. Then a crisis hit: a parent died or left the family, lost a job or suffered a cut in work hours. In some cases, the rent went up or there were too many bills to pay. When families come to Family Promise of Essex County\*, experiencing homelessness, we provide holistic support, from job search counseling to rental assistance to after-school help for their children. The determination and resiliency of these families inspire us on a daily basis to continue to walk – and if needed, to fight -- alongside them on their journey to a better place. Together with our community network, we help these families make lifesaving changes. We couldn't do it without our dedicated supporters: our board and staff, volunteers, donors, congregations and community members. As the Interim Director, it is my privilege to build on the success of past years and continue FPE's mission to serve families experiencing homelessness. Thanks to our amazing community, in 2019 we served 25 percent more families than in 2018. Of the 544 individuals who received our help, 334 were children. We look forward to continuing and where possible expanding this vital work.



Warmly,



**Jackie Baillargeon**  
Interim Executive Director

\*In 2020, we changed our name from Interfaith Hospitality Network to Family Promise of Essex County, Inc.

## OUR 2019 STAFF

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Interim Executive Director

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Director of Housing &  
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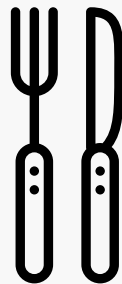
*In 2019, IHN saw a 25% increase in the number of people we were able to serve.*

## The Impact You Made



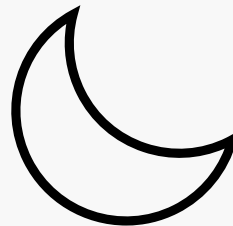
**544**

Individuals Housed  
(with more than 50%  
being children)



**13,581**

Meals Provided



**4,572**

Nights of Emergency  
Shelter



**64,605**

Permanent Housing  
Nights



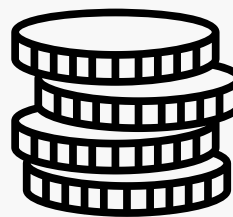
**800**

Volunteers



**420**

Hours of Tutoring



**177**

Rental Assistance  
Support Provided



**110**

Holiday Food  
Baskets



“Every time I turn the key  
in that door,  
I feel a rush of relief,”  
-Marlesha, former IHN client

## Family Success

**Marlesha Ross was working part-time at FedEx and living in Newark with her three-year-old daughter. When FedEx cut her hours, she found herself experiencing homelessness. She and her daughter bounced from shelter to shelter for months. Then Marlesha found IHN. IHN provided Marlesha and her daughter with emergency shelter, while also working with her to find an apartment that she could afford. Unfortunately, with a job that was cutting hours and not paying enough to cover the bills, that was a difficult task.**

While in IHN's shelter program, Marlesha's daughter turned four years old – but a birthday party was not in the budget. IHN coordinated with St. Philomena's Church in Livingston to fulfill the little girl's wish – a Little Mermaid party. She was thrilled – the excitement on her face showed it all!

Just when Marlesha thought that finding more stable employment and housing wasn't in her future, a new path opened up in front of her. IHN volunteer and Beth El Congregation member, Debra Horowitz, informed her that Audible, an Amazon company, was hiring in Newark and guided Marlesha to apply. After a series of interviews, Marlesha got the job! They offered her full-time employment, an increase in pay, and benefits that made her life much more manageable. For the first time in a quite a while, Marlesha felt excited about her future. IHN was then able to find Marlesha and her daughter an apartment. They finally had a stable place to call home. “Every time I turn the key in that door, I feel a rush of relief,” Marlesha said with a sigh. She is now able to afford more pleasures in life, such as calling an Uber when it is raining, enrolling her daughter in a gym class, and even being able to buy something at the grocery store that is not on sale.

These success stories are what inspire IHN to continue its' critical work.



*"IHN has been providing an effective pathway to safe housing for 30 years, and doing this work with care and love. I hope more people will join me in helping continue this critical work." - Margo*

## Donor Highlight

*Margo Greenfield- 30 year volunteer, current IHN Coordinator at St. Stephen's Church in Millburn and one of IHN's earliest donors.*

Margo Greenfield began volunteering with Interfaith Hospitality Network of Essex County in 1988. "It was the end of the Reagan years when it seemed homelessness was a temporary problem, reflecting slashes in government spending for social services. None of us thought we'd be doing this work for 30 years," Margo explained.

Margo described how IHN was a "shoestring operation" then, consisting of a van and a part-time Director/Social Worker, who screened applicants and advised in their search for housing and jobs. "When our kids were young, we volunteered with IHN as a family. We prepared and served meals, helped with homework and played with the children in the program. My kids saw it as simply playing and sharing their games with children whose families were in a temporary, difficult situation." Grown now, each of her children still sees volunteering as important and as sharing what they have with their neighbors. "If children are raised with an understanding of how important it is to give back to the community, it becomes a part of who they are," Margo said.

As the years of volunteering went by, Margo and her family knew they wanted to give in a more considerable way. She began to donate, including making yearly pledges and recurring monthly gifts for special projects. She felt her consistent gifts would supply IHN with the financial security to be able to focus on developing more programs for future growth. "I want to give where I can have a direct impact and my support makes a difference. I have seen IHN lift families into a better quality of life."

Long term donors, like Margo, are an essential part of the IHN community. With their consistent, predictable support, IHN can make plans for the future to more effectively assist families experiencing homelessness.

Margo leaves us with this thought: "IHN, with its supporting congregations and volunteers, has been providing an effective pathway to safe housing for 30 years, and doing this work with care and love. I hope more people will join me in helping continue this critical work."

To join IHN's giving program, visit: <https://ihnessexnj.org/make-a-donation/>

# Our Programs

## **EMERGENCY SHELTER**

IHN provides temporary emergency housing through a network of approximately 40 churches and synagogues in Essex County. Our shelter model includes hospitality by over 1500 volunteers a year, comprehensive guidance and referrals to find housing and jobs through case management by IHN case workers, and community engagement through congregational and other volunteers. Congregations host three or four families (up to 14 people) for a week at a time from 6 pm to 7 am, providing sleeping and relaxation areas, with volunteers from the congregational membership providing meals, activities, and overnight supervision. Families are transported by IHN's van to and from the congregations. During the day, IHN's professional social services staff provide ongoing case management and programming at the IHN Family Resource Center in Montclair. The Center is also available for access to phones, computers and shower facilities.

## **HOME FOR GOOD**

In this prevention and stabilization program, IHN works to place our shelter families into permanent housing as well as to prevent evictions and homelessness for other non-shelter family clients. Services for this program include rental assistance such as back rent, first and last month's rent, and security deposits, as well as case management services for up to one year. In addition to case management, IHN's programming is based on need and includes: job training, job search and interviewing skills; seminars on workplace protocol, budget management, landlord/tenant relationships, apartment maintenance, parenting, wellness and nutrition; and assistance with childcare and transportation options. Clients from both of our programs often stay connected to IHN for years, attending our holiday parties and making use of additional services such as the disbursement of donated clothing, toiletry items, book, and toys.

## **YOUTH AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

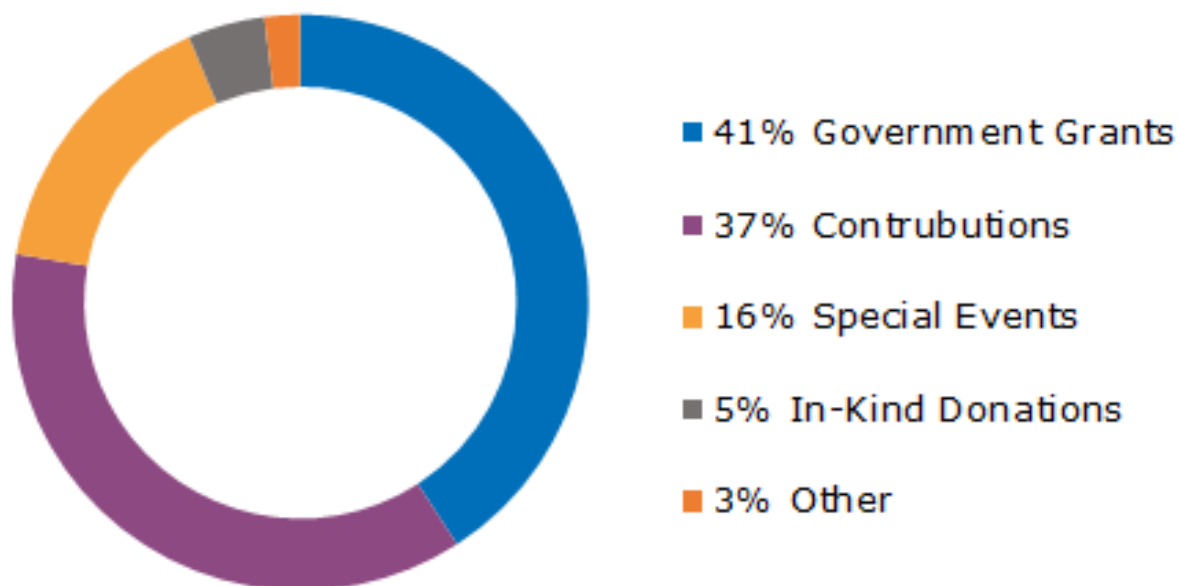
As part of its support services, IHN provides an after-school program for youth who are currently or have previously been in our emergency shelter or Home for Good programs, as well as local youth from the community. In our after-school center, children receive homework help from volunteer tutors as well as monthly STEM programming and "Fun Friday" trips to local activities such as bowling and Doin' Dishes, paint-your-own ceramics studio. One goal of this program is for our youth to feel part of their communities and participate in events with their peers. To this end, IHN provides school supplies and clothing, birthday and holiday parties, and even Halloween costumes. In addition, when funds allow, our program includes summer camp opportunities, educational/community-building field trips, and three family trips per year. In the past trips have included visiting the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia and the Camden Aquarium, as well as a Beach Day at Point Pleasant Beach. IHN is also proud to host our own Girl Scout Troop made up almost entirely of girls in our short-term shelter and Home for Good programs.

Envisioning a nation where every family has a home, a livelihood, and the chance to build a better future.

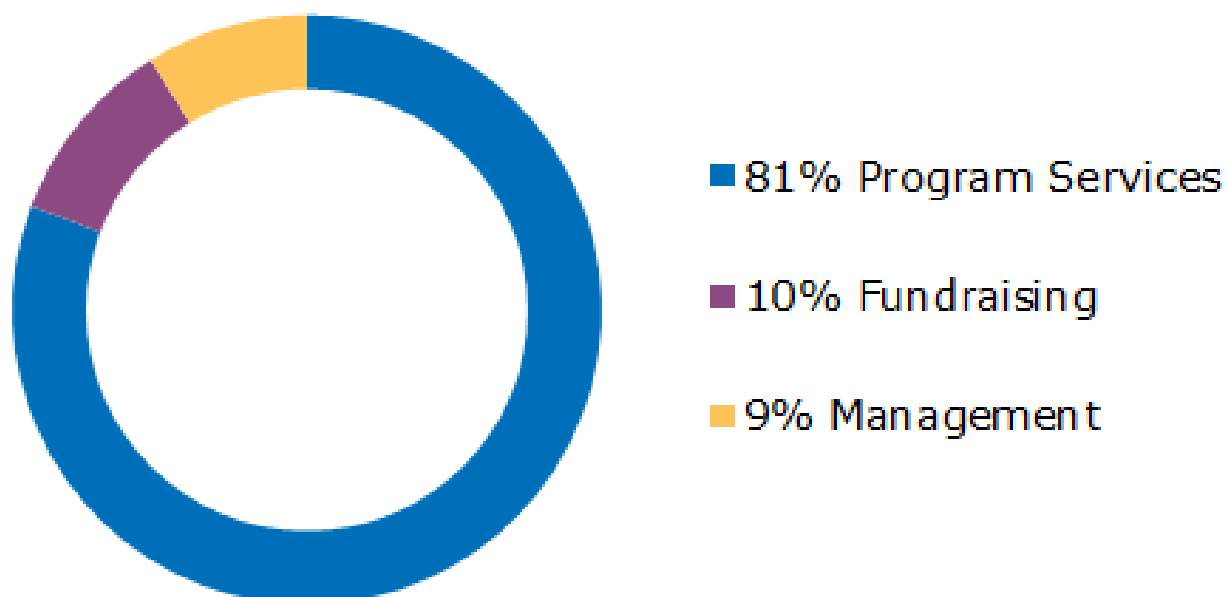
We help families experiencing homelessness and low-income families achieve sustainable independence through a holistic community-based approach.

# 2019 Financial Overview

## Income



## Expenses







# Thank You to Our Donors!

**The IHN *Dream Team* is a group of individuals who make a five year pledge of \$1,000 or more annually to provide IHN with sustainable non-designated funding. Being able to count on this pledged income allows IHN to plan for the future of the organization.**

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# Thank You to Our Congregations!

## Host Congregations

Vincent United Methodist Church  
Grace Episcopal Church  
St. George Episcopal Church  
Wyoming Presbyterian Church  
Park United Methodist  
Union Congregational Church  
Prospect Presbyterian  
Our Lady of Sorrows  
B'nai Jeshurun  
Notre Dame Catholic Church  
Temple Shalom  
St. Philomena's Catholic Church  
Agudath Israel  
Congregation Shomrei Emunah  
St. Mark's AME Church  
Grace Presbyterian Church  
St. Paul Baptist Church  
St. Cassian Catholic Church  
Temple B'nai Abraham  
Central Presbyterian Church  
Congregation Beth El  
Morrow Memorial Church

## Support Congregations

First Congregational Church of Montclair  
Glen Ridge Congregational  
South Orange Vailsburg Methodist  
Redeemer Church of Montclair  
Caldwell United Methodist Church  
Unitarian Universal Church of Montclair  
Christ Church  
Congregation Beth El  
Temple Ner Tamid  
St. Matthew AME Church



Interfaith  
Hospitality Network  
of Essex County, Inc.

*an affiliate of Family Promise®*

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## Get Involved

Support the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Essex County and help provide families with emergency shelter and housing services in our community. Established in 1988, IHN has been keeping homeless families together and guiding them towards home and self-sufficiency. Visit us online to see how you can join our community!

## Get Social



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