



## Ridgeway House Transitional Homeless Shelter **TALBOT COUNTY, MD**

### Neighborhood Service Center, Inc.

Ms. Marilyn M. Neal, Executive Director

### Fall 2019 Edition



#### **Ridgeway**

According to the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, *“As of January 2018, Maryland had an estimated 7,144 experiencing homelessness on any given day, as reported by Continuums of Care to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban*

*Development (HUD). Of that Total, 699 were family households, 574 were Veterans, 267 were unaccompanied young adults (ages 18-24), and 1,409 were individuals experiencing chronic homelessness.”*

As a part of the Mid-Shore Continuum of Care, Ridgeway Transitional Homeless Shelter is a low-barrier shelter in Talbot County, Maryland. Ridgeway is primarily funded through Talbot

County Government and is grateful to have the County’s continued support of the shelter. Talbot County funds 75% of Ridgeway’s operations. Ridgeway is also funded through the Housing Solutions Program Grant via the Mid Shore Continuum of Care- under the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. This funding assists in rapidly re-housing shelter residents. Ridgeway Shelter is operated under the direction of Neighborhood Service Center’s Executive Director, Ms. Marilyn M. Neal.

Through the grant funding and donations from Talbot County Residents, Ridgeway has assisted Marylanders who are experiencing, or who are at risk of, homelessness, since 1991.

Ridgeway Shelter has 6 beds, 3 for women and 3 for men. In recent months, Ridgeway has become a “low-barrier” shelter which means that the shelter will accept people with challenging backgrounds that are on the path of having their own home.

As a “housing first” shelter, Ridgeway works at getting the residents into stable housing. In recent years, “diversion” has been a way to end homelessness by helping the client find alternative housing as opposed to homelessness. Ridgeway and Neighborhood Service Center also help with “rapid-re-housing” which is particularly useful to residents

who are chronically homeless or those that hop from shelter-to-shelter.

### ***Ridgeway's Services***



In June 2019, Ridgeway served 11 residents total. Residents receive services such as meals, budget management training, referral services, life skills training, one-to-one mentoring sessions, resume review and writing.

### ***Ridgeway's Partners***

Local churches, businesses, and individuals often deliver items to Ridgeway's front porch, during the hours in which Ridgeway is closed, Monday-Friday, 8 am – 4 pm. The shelter is closed during these hours to allow the residents to “*pound the pavement*”, search for housing and employment opportunities, attend group sessions, and handle other business.

### ***Ridgeway's Outdoor Space***



Ridgeway's front porch area is enclosed and allows residents additional space to socialize with one another or take in the fresh air. Ridgeway is located in a quiet, family-oriented neighborhood in Easton at 120 Aurora Street.



Also, outdoors, Ridgeway has a spacious backyard equipped with a barbecue grill, chairs, umbrella, seating, and a table. This allows for the residents to partake in outdoor activities to include garden events, and additional space to read and socialize with one another.

### ***Ridgeway's Accommodations During Inclement Weather***



During inclement weather (above 90 degrees in the summer and below 32 degrees in the winter), Ridgeway opens its doors to its residents during its

regularly scheduled closed hours, Mondays – Fridays.

### *Ridgeway's Cozy Living-Space*



Ridgeway offers comfortable housing space for the residents. The location has two bedrooms, an office for staff members, a large walk-in closet for resident items, 1 full bath, 1 powder room, 1 large kitchen with a washer machine and dryer area, in addition to, a dining room and sitting room space.

Residents meet in the sitting room for the weekly meetings held to review shelter rules, answer resident questions, and follow-up on area resources.

Also included in this space is a flat screen television, DVD player, donated books, a resource shelf, computer, and printer for residents to use to revise or create resumes, print materials, and perform searches for housing, employment, and other useful resources.

Ridgeway's sleeping quarters are situated on the second floor. Residents seeking to stay with

Ridgeway for up to 90 days must have the ability to travel safely up and down the staircase.

### *Narcan Training*



During the month of June, Ridgeway received training on administering NARCAN and how to obtain resources for those undergoing the effects of substance abuse. The training was held at Talbot County Department of Social Services on June 26<sup>th</sup> from 9AM-12PM. The training included a demonstration on how to administer Narcan and there was a discussion on drug abuse in the area. NARCAN is a nasal spray used to temporarily reverse the effects of opioid medicines. The medicine NARCAN is said to have no effect in people who are not taking opioid medicines.

## Meet the Ridgeway Staff



Jason Elias, Shelter Manager

As part of his duties, Mr. Elias assists residents with their daily needs. He also does intakes, keeps track of the residents' progress and finds the resources for residents in need. As Shelter Manager, Mr. Elias goes over the paperwork, leads the weekly meetings, reports to NSC and helps the residents obtain the housing, counseling and employment help that they need in an expedient manner.



Joanna Williams, Shelter Staff

Ms. Williams has been with Ridgeway for many years. Williams's regular shift is Mondays -Fridays, 12 am -8 am and she also does other shifts when needed. Ms. Williams prepares meals for the residents, assigns chores, does intakes, and helps the residents with their goals of permanent housing. Ms. Williams is known for her wealth of experience, compassion and ability to help the residents in their quest to find stable housing.

Ms. Marilyn M. Neal, Executive Director, The Neighborhood Service Center, Inc.  
126 Port Street, Easton, Maryland 21601, (410) 822-5015



Hugh Wilson, PT Shelter Relief Worker

Mr. Wilson is a PT Shelter Relief Worker. His duties are intakes, helping clients with their daily needs, assisting with employment searches and housing needs, as well as monitoring household chores and providing coverage for staff absences. Mr. Wilson is known for listening to the residents' issues, retaining and relaying information and steering them to the right resources. Mr. Wilson is on staff Saturdays and Sundays, 8 pm – 8 am and is on call for inclement weather and to fill-in for staff absences.



Olivia Ross, PT Shelter Relief Worker

Miss Ross, newly hired PT Shelter Relief Worker, began her work with Ridgeway on July 17, 2019. She offers services to the residents on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 4 pm - 12 am.

The Neighborhood Service Center, Inc. works toward eliminating poverty by empowering families to be self-sufficient.