unity shelter

STATUS REPORT 2022

Providing safe shelter through collaborative care.

A note from our Executive Director

In 2022 Unity Shelter worked hard to meet the growing and complex needs of our neighbors experiencing houselessness by developing new programs and positions, and serving more people across our programs. Seeing that there were families and medically sensitive seniors who were not being served by other shelter programs, we partnered with Community Services Consortium to start an Emergency Hotel Shelter program in August, and have partnered with Samaritan Health Services to open medical respite rooms, providing safe spaces for healing and recovery. Through a partnership with IHN-CCO, and additional support from Oregon Community Foundation we are expanding staff roles into new areas to provide deeper levels of care and engagement for those we serve as they transition into housing, and working to better connect all our guests with the services and healthcare they need. We've also been very fortunate to have recently hired a Program Manager for SafePlace – a long standing goal finally fulfilled.

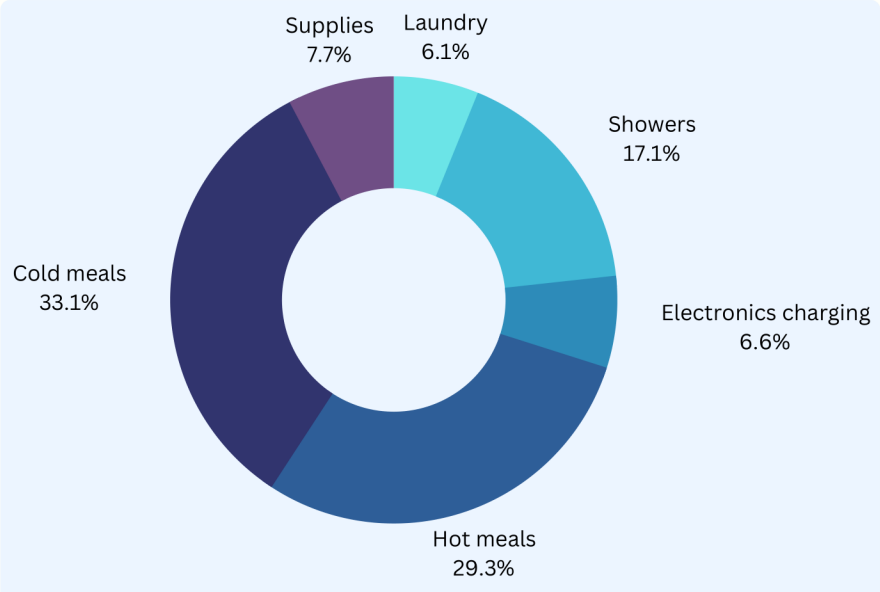
This work is hard and takes a toll on those who do it. Our staff go through trainings on trauma-informed care, mental health first aid, and de-escalation, among many others. But it's hard to train for compassion and care, and every day I see how much our staff do to make sure that those we serve feel cared for and welcome. I'm proud of the people of Unity Shelter. The work that they do is vital, and inspiring.

Thank you for your support of Unity Shelter. None of this great work happens without your support!

Shawn M. Collins
Executive Director

Our year in review

We have seen an overwhelming need for safe spaces where individuals can sleep and gain access to services. Here are some statistics from this year that highlight the specific needs we've seen:



A breakdown of each individual service we have provided so far in 2022.

During the day, the Men's Shelter operates as the Hygiene Center. Regardless of gender, from 11 am to 5 pm, individuals can visit and take showers, do their laundry, and get lunch. There were 18,769 individual services provided in 2022*.

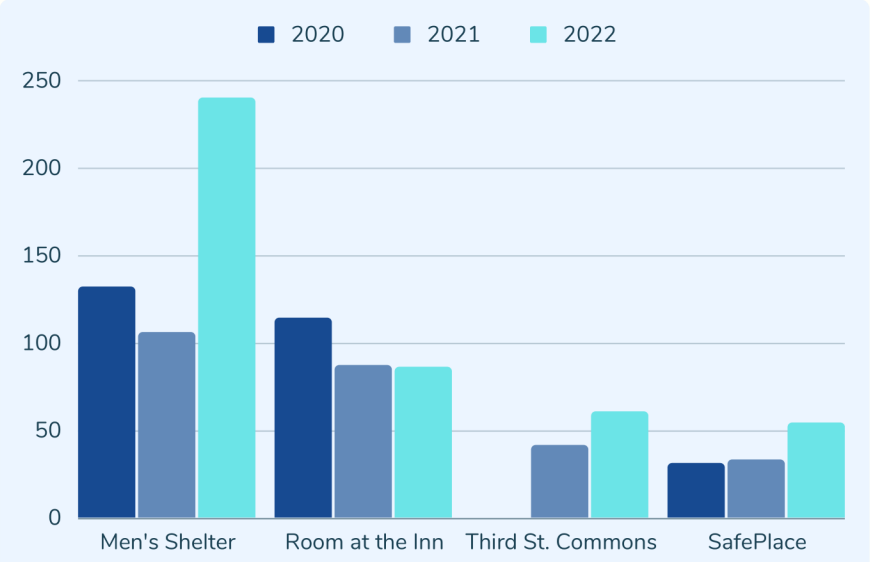
6.5
Average number of months a person spends in a regular or microshelter

637
Unique individuals served at the Hygiene Center alone in 2022

35
Covid-19 positive individuals provided isolation shelter at Third St. Commons

44
Individuals sheltered through the Emergency Hotel Program

At the height of the pandemic, we couldn't safely keep operating as normal. We decreased capacity in the shelters, and Room at the Inn stayed open 24/7. When Covid-19 restrictions started lifting this year, we saw a tremendous increase in the need for supportive services, and the number of individuals we saw at our programs.



Unique individuals served per year, by program

Statistics as of November 10, 2022, one service record = one individual type of service was provided.

Meet Taryn Gabbert

Taryn took on the role of the Men's Shelter Program Manager this spring. She sat down with us to talk about her background and role at the Men's Shelter, and answer our Three Questions:

Q: What interested you in the job in the first place?
A: I've always known I want to help people. Having an organization that I believe in is important to me, and I could tell from my initial interview that this was an organization I wanted to work for. The services we are providing in the community are important. I've been homeless, and I know how important it is to have showers, charging stations, and a place to wash clothes. And I love the leadership team here. We all work together, and we all have the same vision, which is encouraging.

Q: What has surprised you about the job thus far?
A: How deep the need is. I know we're making progress, but there's so much more to do. Shawn has had to remind me that the initial goal of the Men's Shelter was "safe shelter for the night" and that not so long ago, we weren't providing meals and the hygiene center didn't exist. So, we've met the initial goal, and we're doing a lot more. But when you're in the trenches, some days it feels like we're just putting out fires. I know how many socks we go through in a day, the number of people we're serving food and providing showers to – yet I know we're not reaching the entire community. There are so many people who need services. And another surprise is the amount of untreated mental health that we see every day and the lack of resources available to treat mental health issues.

Q: What do you like to do in your free time?
A: I love self-care, which for me means actively investing in myself – cooking and eating good and healthy food, and taking care of my body. I try to keep a balance of fitness – of my mind, my spirit, my body, and my emotions. I enjoy reading – particularly self-help-type books. And I also like being active and outside: running, hiking, playing pickleball, volleyball. I was on the Housing First Parks and Rec softball team this summer, and I organized a Unity Shelter volleyball team for the fall.

Organization updates

The economic disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic continues to unfold, driving more people into poverty and houselessness, and in need of our services. Since Unity Shelter's inception in January of 2020, the number of bed nights per year has increased by 189%. In this year alone, we have seen a 26% increase in the number of individuals engaged with Unity Shelter programs and outreach.

Since Unity Shelter's inception, the number of bed nights* per year has increased by

189%

*A bed night is defined as one person in one bed per one night.

We are working diligently at all of our programs to adapt to the needs of our neighbors experiencing houselessness.

Here are some of the exciting ways we've expanded our services throughout the community this year:

Emergency Hotel Program

Unity Shelter recently received funding for emergency hotel sheltering. This program allows us to temporarily shelter families and medically fragile individuals in Corvallis area hotels, while assisting them with basic needs and resource navigation. Since the program's start in August 2022, we have served 44 individuals for over 1,700 bed nights in the hoteling program. We are adding additional funding and staffing to continue this program for as long as possible.

Increase in shelter capacity

We are excited to begin increasing capacity at nearly all Unity Shelter programs. SafePlace has added 7 new microshelters in 2022, giving us 31 microshelters total across 6 different host sites in Corvallis. By the end of 2022, Room at the Inn will add 13 more beds, and the Men's Shelter will add 8. Our goal for 2023 is to continue increasing capacity as much as resources and staffing will allow.

New partnerships

For many who lack housing, recovery from needed surgery or other procedures is nearly impossible. To address this, Unity Shelter has partnered with Samaritan Health Services to provide medical respite rooms at Third Street Commons for patients in need. Patients can rest and recover knowing staff is on-site 24/7, and medical providers can provide the support needed to ensure successful recovery.

Acknowledgements

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Emma Deane - SafePlace Program Manager
Nohe Kahalewai - Room at the Inn Program Manager
Luther MacLean - Third St. Commons Program Manager
Taryn Gabbert - Men's Shelter Program Manager

Community Partners

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First United Methodist Church
Corvallis Evangelical Church
Good Samaritan Episcopal Church
Life Community Church
Corvallis Housing First
Stone Soup
Samaritan Health Services
Benton County Health Department
...and many more!

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We thank you for your continued support of our programs.

We couldn't do the work we do without help and support from our community.
We look forward to 2023!

Scan the QR code to make a donation to one of our programs.

If you prefer to donate by check, please send it to the address below.
More information is available on our website.

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