With all agency goals completed last year, I am excited to begin working on the 2019 VCHC strategic plan. Board members, staff and residents outlined the strategy we will take to expand our programs to assist homeless Veterans while maintaining excellence in the quality of our services.

One of the first initiatives for this year is to expand the Board of Directors. We are fortunate to have several candidates that support the mission of VCHC and will be a strong asset to our Veterans.

VCHC is also partnering with other community agencies and developers to increase opportunities for Veterans and families to obtain and maintain permanent, affordable, housing in our community.

We are grateful to our community supporters for all they do. The dinners, breakfasts, food collections, donations, supply collections and events are instrumental in VCHC serving our Veterans.

Norm McFarlane, President of the Board

So many wonderful things have taken place since our last newsletter.

In November 2018 we held the Third Annual Veterans Ball at the Hall of Springs. It was a wonderful evening, enjoyed by all. Be on the lookout for information about this year’s Ball to be held on November 3, 2019.

VCHC was able to increase the number of apartments in our permanent housing program. This program is for homeless Veterans with a disability and low income.

This past Holiday season our community individuals, churches, businesses, Toys for Tots, and neighboring corporations provided gifts, toys, and gift cards to the Veterans and low income families that we serve. Thank you is not enough to all who helped veterans the opportunity to participate in the Holiday joy most of us take for granted.

In 2018 VCHC assisted over 250 Veterans in our continuum of programs and supports. In addition 300 low income and disabled Saratoga County families were assisted.

As we enter into 2019 VCHC is committed more than ever to help our homeless veterans gain the skills, regain their dignity and lead a successful, productive life in their community.

Please support the events that are held to benefit the programs of VCHC. You will not only have a great time, you will be serving our mission.

Cheryl Hage-Perez
Executive Director

Save the Date

Sunday, November 3, 2019
108 Avenue of The Pines, Saratoga Springs
5 pm to 9 pm

Dinner « Live Music « Cash Bar « Silent Auction
Valet Parking

For more information and to purchase tickets go to: www.veterans-ball.info
The Support Services for Veterans & Families (SSVF) of VCHC was awarded accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). CARF accreditation means that the SSVF program at VCHC is committed to reducing risk, addressing health and safety concerns, respecting preferences of individuals (cultural or otherwise) and providing the best quality of care possible. Accreditation demonstrates that VCHC has made a specific commitment to put the needs of their residents at the center of everything they do and that they respect the rights and individuality of its clients.

Karen Follett, the Director of the SSVF Program and her team will readily tell you, it is not a simple process. Preparations for the survey involved months of ensuring our SSVF Program met the high standards of excellence required for accreditation.

VCHC is proud that after the first survey, which took several days, we were notified that CARF reviewers were very impressed with our SSVF program and a three year accreditation was awarded.

This accreditation decision represents the highest level of accreditation that can be awarded to an organization and shows the organization’s substantial conformance to the CARF standards.

An organization receiving a Three-Year Accreditation has put itself through a rigorous peer review process and has demonstrated to a team of surveyors during an on-site visit that its programs and services are of the highest quality, measurable, and accountable.

What Are the Signs of Crisis?

Feeling anxious or alone and thinking about suicide are some of the signs that a Veteran may be in crisis. Sadly 22 Veterans each day commit suicide. Help is available. If you know a Veterans who may be in crisis please do not hesitate to reach out.
Meet Jay

Janet, who prefers to be Jay, came to Guardian House in March of 2017. She just been released from a drug rehabilitation program, where she stayed for several months following a drug overdose in which she flat lined.

How did that happen to this woman who at 22 joined the Air Force to proudly serve her Country?

In 1985, Jay wanted to make a difference and chose the Air Force to help her do that. Less than a year later her dream was shattered. Jay was a victim of Military Sexual Trauma. (MST). She reached out for help. She was not taken seriously, was told to keep quiet, and the abuse continued for a full year. The physical sexual assaults continued as well as the sexual harassment.

After discharge in 1989, out on her own, she found the trauma too much to overcome and turned to drugs to minimize the emotional pain within. The use of drugs soon turned to addiction, which led to homelessness.

After Jay flat lined, she woke up and realized she was going to die if she did not get help.

When she had completed the rehab program she had no place to call home and no supports to help her. She found Guardian House.

Jay struggled for a while, adjusting to living in a home with other women, most of who had experienced the same trauma, but she soon grounded herself.

She followed the program, went to meetings, counseling and most of all shared in the peer to peer benefits of others she lived with.

After one year, Jay became the House Manager as she continued to work on her issues. She was able to graduate from Drug Court, get her drivers license back and most importantly she got herself back. She found renewed confidence, high self-esteem, courage to ask for help, and became able to accept the help. She now understands that she was not responsible for the MST happening to her, she was the victim.

On March 1, 2019 Jay transitioned to independent living. She has become a role model for all the women who have walked the same walk. We are so proud of Jay and the success she has achieved. She did all the work, VCHC was just there to provide the mountain. Jay did the climbing.

Congratulations!

Honoring Those Who Gave The Ultimate Sacrifice
Saratoga Springs Memorial Day Parade
May 23, 2019
6:30 pm
BD Medical Technology from New Jersey provided generous amount of Christmas gifts to our Veterans and their families this holiday season. April Proscia from BD drove up the weekend before the busy holiday to deliver a U-Haul van of gifts to our Associate Executive Director, Leigha Rosenberger. The employees of BD pulled tags of wish list items for the Veterans of our transitional homes as well as the Veteran families residing in our permanent supportive housing programs. Thank you for helping our Veterans enjoy the holiday season and be a part of the gift giving to their children.

VCHC Executive Director, Cheryl Hage–Perez and Associate Executive Director, Leigha Rosenberger were presented with proceeds from this years 9th annual Malta 5k. Paul Looms, Race Director for the Malta 5k has made it his mission to help VCHC in continuing to support our Veterans their needs. Thank you for your dedication and loyalty to keeping the Malta 5k a huge success in our community.

In memory of a Veteran who died by suicide, his dad sponsored a day for our Veterans to attend a game at Yankee Stadium.

Mike Gailor proudly remembers his son Sean who served our Country. His story is unfortunately shared by many. 22 Veterans a day commit suicide.

We stand with the families of these Veterans and continue to advocate for more services to support them before they give up hope.
Female Veterans Comprise
Fastest Growing Segment of Homeless
Veteran Population

In a 2016 report, the National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans said the number of women identified by the program as homeless, tripled to 36,443 in a five-year period ending in 2015. That figure, according to the center, is projected to rise by about 9 percent to nearly 40,000 by 2025.

Many homeless women veterans were victims of military sexual trauma and feel resentment towards the military and the VA, and as a result do not identify themselves as being a veteran. They tend to stay away from the organizations wishing to help them because they feel they were betrayed by that organization in the past.

According to VA’s National Center for PTSD, data from VA’s military sexual trauma screening program show that about 1 in 4 women respond "yes," that they experienced sexual trauma or assault while in the military.

Also, homeless women veterans don't fit the stereotype of your normal homeless person living on the streets. Female homeless veterans often have children and tend to temporarily stay with family or friends.

Just as homeless male veterans often don't seek help because they were instilled with a sense of self-reliance and pride while in the military, female homeless veterans are also often caregivers for their children and have a very hard time asking for help.

Guardian House

Guardian House, located in Ballston Spa, New York is the only supportive housing program for homeless female veterans in New York State, and one of just seven in the entire United States.

VCHC is proud to serve these women who have given their time to proudly serve our Country.

For various reasons these women have a difficult time transitioning from military life to civilian life, largely due to their experiences while serving.

With staff support the ladies work on their issues and when ready transition to a productive, independent life in our community. They stay at Guardian House up to two years.

These female Veterans work hard to achieve their goals. For those who have children, family reunification is a priority.
For five years VCHC had identified a need for a large storage space. Often the homeless Veterans that we serve would come with very few possessions, but they were all they owned and wanted to keep them. Unfortunately we never had the space to store these items for them.

We also started to accept donations of furniture, household items and supplies to help our Veterans set up their home when they were ready to transition to independent living. The response from the community has been tremendous. Unfortunately lack of space inhibited us from accepting all that was offered.

Enter the Veterans Business Council!

They initiated contact with Heather Martin the manager of the Saratoga Springs Home Depot. The first meeting was a success and it was uphill from there. Within a month a grant from Home Depot was approved to build this beautiful garage.

It has been a blessing to our Veterans.

We send our sincere gratitude to the VBC, Heather Martin and Home Depot.

Thank You

If you have furniture, household items, small appliances, pots and pans, dishes, glassware, etc. that is in very good condition, we welcome your donation.

With scheduling, we can happily pick up your donation.

For more information please call Stan at 518-885-0091 ext. 102

VCHC is a not for profit 501 c 3. Your donation is tax deductible as allowed by law.
May 18th– 11th Annual Armed Forces Day Parade– Route 9 Downtown Malta
May 23rd– Saratoga Springs Memorial Day Parade
June 1st @ 1pm – Ceremony for the unveiling of bricks for Veterans
June 8th– Saratoga Flag Day Parade
June 28th— Burnt Hills Oratorio Society Golf Tournament– Van Patten Golf Course
April 16th—16th Annual Citizenship Ceremony– Saratoga National Historical Park
July 7th—Saratoga Wilton Elks Veterans picnic– 1 Elks Ln Saratoga Springs
July 13th– Park Fest– Gavin Park
July 24th– Military Appreciation Date– Saratoga Racetrack
August 21st– Community Booth– Saratoga Racetrack
August 24th– Saratoga Wilton Elk Car Show– 1 Elks Ln Saratoga Springs
September 7th– 10th Annual Malta 5k - Malta Tech Park
October 12th– Falling Leaves 5k– Kelly Park Ballston Spa
Yes, I want to donate to support the programs of VCHC. I will do so by:

- Making a monetary donation of $________
- Making a material donation _________
- Planning a fundraiser event _________
- Other _______________

Name: ____________________________

Address: __________________________

Email: ____________________________

Phone: ____________________________

Thank You For Your Support!!

Return to: VCHC 20 Prospect St. Building 2 Suite 313, Ballston Spa, NY 12020

Visit our website at

www.vchcny.org

DONATION WISH LIST:

- 10 & 30 Gallon Trash bags
- Paper Products
- Personal Care Items
- Laundry Soap & Dryer Sheets
- Twin Quilts & Comforters
- CDTA Bus Passes
- Gift Cards (groceries & gas)
- Food Items
- Feminine Products
- Cleaning Supplies
- Furniture
- Household Items

Please make sure your donation is in good condition for our Veterans