



THE FACES OF EUMA

1033 E. 26th St. Erie, PA 16504 | EUMA-Erie.org

EUMA's Our Neighbors' Place Impact

Six local churches hosted and over 45 local church and other volunteers and EUMA staff welcomed 314 of our homeless neighbors, as Jesus would this Winter. Our Neighbors' Place is Erie County's shelter of last resort. This low-barrier shelter is committed to welcoming all adults who come, a place to get out of the cold, take a hot shower and receive love and care as Jesus would provide. As you can see below, the numbers of those sheltered increased significantly. To all those who participated, thank you.

TOTAL BED NIGHTS



TOTAL UNDUPLICATED GUESTS



UNDUPLICATED MALE GUESTS



UNDUPLICATED FEMALE GUESTS



Youth between 18-24 years of age:
SEASON 10: 13 SEASON 11: 18

RARE

Keep people out of the homeless system.

BRIEF

Rapidly move people from homeless to home.

ONE-TIME

End the cycle of homelessness.

*Data based on 119 nights in Season 11 vs. 120 nights in Season 10.



Update from the CEO

A TIME FOR REFLECTION

done this by strengthening our existing shelter work, adding new ministries including Our Neighbors' Place, Rapid ReHousing and our partnerships to end homelessness for youth aging out of foster care.

Additionally, your EUMA has converted and/or acquired and rehabilitated, 32 temporary and permanent housing units all for our neighbors at risk of or who have experienced a housing crisis. EUMA has nearly doubled our work without expanding our administration capacity to manage it. We have prepared our work outside — have readied ourselves in the field and the day has come to build our house where we can fellowship together, expand the necessary administrative resources to better support those in the field, and upon a solid foundation, move mountains for those who are experiencing a housing crisis, severe mental illness, substance use disorder and the broken relationships that contribute to their housing insecurity.

The only reason EUMA exists — the only reason EUMA's finance, administration, fundraising, human resource, maintenance

staff exist — is to strengthen EUMA's efforts to end homelessness by making it rare, brief and one-time as Jesus would. I rejoice and say thank you! Thank you for the way you pray, give and engage with your EUMA that makes all of this possible.

As always and with anyone we welcome, EUMA yokes excellent programming with our commitment that all will experience the love, grace and mercy that we have first experienced from Jesus Christ. Great things lie ahead in 2023 and we can't wait to share and celebrate them with you.

Solomon said, "Prepare your work outside; get everything ready for yourself in the field, and AFTER that, build your house."

On behalf of the EUMA board of directors and your senior leadership team, I wanted to update you on EUMA's purchase of properties at West 9th and Liberty Streets to include the Quinn Funeral home building pictured below and a separate three-unit apartment building. The former will be converted into EUMA's new administration offices and the latter will strengthen EUMA's efforts to preserve affordable permanent housing for our neighbors who have experienced a housing crisis or who are at risk of a housing crisis.

EUMA has invested in strengthening our work outside — building and adding to our ministries to end homelessness. We have



JOURNEY HOME



We saw a need. You responded.

When do you become an adult? In the foster care system, youth turning 18 age out and are expected to be self-sufficient. Who helped you get your first apartment? Who showed you how to apply, interview, get and keep a job? Who celebrated your first day on the job? Do you remember who taught you how to budget your money, help you care for your child or navigate new relationships?

Each year in the United States 20% of youth aging out of foster care will enter the homeless system. 25% will have justice involvement and 50% will have their children removed from the home without an intervention. We can do better.

Thanks to you and our partners Bethesda Lutheran Services and Family Services of NW PA, through EUMA, you are providing youth aging out of foster

care with independent and supportive living designed to keep them out of the homeless system — out of jail and with their children.

At EUMA's largest apartment buildings, trained resident assistants (RA) live in the same building with the youth. RA's are accessible to answer questions, help youth navigate their independence AND responsibilities. In community, they fellowship together by going to the zoo, a SeaWolves game and have game and pizza nights. Together, they celebrate successes and mourn struggles.

Sounds great, but does it work? Since our partnership began, EUMA has housed 63 youth. Of the 57 exited from Journey Home, 82.5% exited to permanent housing. While four exited to homelessness, EUMA and our partners continued to provide services and within three months, two more housed.



Grant Luciano, EUMA Resident Assistant, Living Grace Apartments

HIGHLIGHTED VOLUNTEER

I spoke with another face of EUMA, Ann Marie Ernst, EUMA's treasurer and finance committee chairperson of the board of directors, volunteer in EUMA's Bridge of Hope program, Heart to Heart member and frequent event participant.

Tell us a little about yourself.

I've been married for 27 years to Todd. We have four children: Steve and his wife Rachel, Sara, Ashley and Morgan. I have one grandson, Gregory, who is the light of my life! When I'm not playing with Gregory, I am the business office manager at Stairways Behavioral Health, an affiliate of Journey Health System



I'm a member of Glenwood United Methodist Church in Erie. We have been a very proud supporter of EUMA for many decades.

Why do you volunteer at EUMA?

I get as much from volunteering as hopefully those I'm serving. I'm a member of the Bridge of Hope team — a new ministry at EUMA that connects local churches like Glenwood UMC with families with children who are homeless. Together, we help them move from homeless to a permanent home of their own.

Todd and I also enjoy volunteering at Our Neighbors' Place Overflow Shelter. This is one of my favorite places to volunteer. I meet so many different people — so many different faces — all made in the image of God — so many different stories.

It can be challenging some evenings. While I wish I could do more, knowing that my homeless neighbors have a safe, warm place to get a shower, sleep on a cot and receive a welcome from church volunteers — that is a good thing and well-worth the challenges.

Ann Marie with just some of your EUMA staff



What do you love most about volunteering?

I love meeting people and interacting with them. Whether it's meeting a homeless family for the first time with hope in their eyes for a better future, a woman in the shelter trying to escape an abusive relationship, or one of the many people who participate in EUMA's bicycle charity event, Ride for The Refuge — no two stories are the same. Ride for The Refuge: <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/rftr23/>

Did anything surprise you?

Everything surprises me! Just when I think I've got the answer to fix this, I realize how complicated and difficult it is for our homeless neighbors. I'm so grateful to be just one face of EUMA as we end homelessness by making it rare, brief and one-time as Jesus would.

RAPID RE-HOUSING

Started in 2017, EUMA's Rapid ReHousing program, My Way Home FINDS housing, temporarily PAYS for housing and helps our neighbors experiencing a housing crisis STAY permanently housed in communities across Erie County.

"Getting here hasn't been easy, but thanks to the EUMA staff, we made it!"

Allen and his twelve-year-old daughter Jennifer are part of the My Way Home program. Here is some of his story.

After a lifetime of taking care of others, Allen's addiction and struggles with family resulted in jail-time.

"I was at such a low point in my life. I truly feel that going to jail saved me. It forced me to get sober and realign my life."

Although he was now sober, Allen was

released from jail and into homelessness. He recalled, "It was Winter. I went from owning my own home to prison and then homeless." Allen remembered sleeping on friend's couches, sleeping in a storage unit and the back of his truck.

Allen said, "When I was living in my truck, it was broken into. What little I had was stolen."

That's when Allen was referred to EUMA's My Way Home program. "I had nothing to bring with me except the clothes on my back," said Allen. "That's when my life changed for the better."

EUMA's housing case managers met with Allen. We discussed his needs, what he wanted to accomplish and wrapped him with the social services and housing supports that helped him achieve his goals. It worked!

Allen got a full time job and began saving his money. With the help of EUMA, he got an apartment. He said,

"I wanted to provide a better life for me and my daughter." After getting a home of his own, Allen was granted custody of his daughter. Allen, his daughter's bedroom and her cat are pictured below.

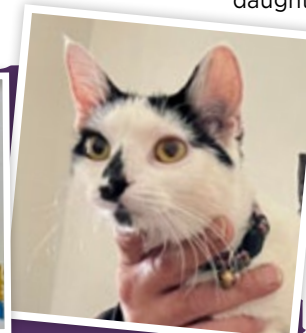
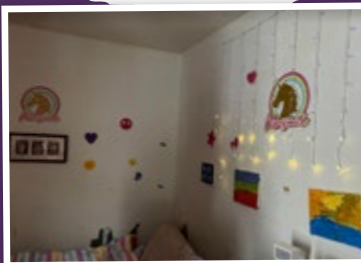
Allen shared, "Thank you to the EUMA staff, especially Michelle, my housing case worker and EUMA supporters for helping me get where I am today. I am beyond grateful for all you've done. EUMA has given me the opportunity to bring my family together by offering a safe and thriving home for my daughter."

"God has been at the forefront of all my struggles and triumphs. I will not lose my faith and keep pushing to be the best Dad to my daughter."

Allen received an EUMA's Rainbow Connection Thrift Store voucher. Allen said, "Because of the support from the Rainbow Connection, I was able to fully furnish my new apartment. I gave my daughter the larger room. Jennifer was

thrilled to decorate her very own room with a magical unicorn theme. We recently added her first vanity ever!"

"EUMA has truly been our angels. God bless you all!" From all of us at EUMA, God bless you for ending homelessness for families with children — as Jesus would!



HOW TO HELP

PRAY

Pray for Allen and his daughter Jennifer as they re-build their lives together in their new home.

Pray for the nine families with children staying at EUMA's The Refuge as they work to secure permanent housing.

Last night 10 Veteran men were on a pathway to permanent housing at EUMA's Liberty House. Pray as they manage their mental illness, maintain their sobriety, strengthen their relationships and secure a permanent home of their own.

GIVE

Join the cause. End homelessness in Northwest PA by investing in EUMA now and in the future. Did you know that EUMA accepts appreciated stock, bitcoin, real estate and can help you leave a legacy that will end homelessness for years to come. For more information, contact Jess Gray, chief development officer at: 814.456.8073, ext. 105 or JGray@EUMA-Erie.org. Also, Erie Gives is on August 8! Mark your calendars! In honor of 135 years in ministry, EUMA has set a \$135,000 goal!

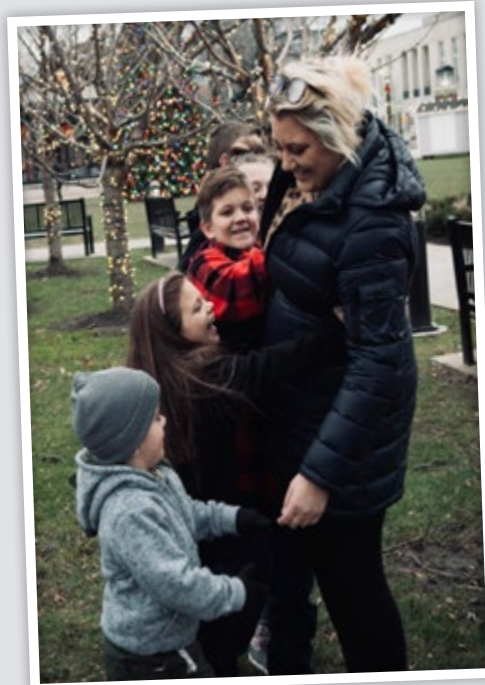
ENGAGE

Participate in one or all of EUMA's annual events! Take steps, grab your clubs, run the race and pedal for a purpose this summer. Sign up today to participate, volunteer and financially support these efforts! Learn more at: www.EUMA-Erie.org

A year ago I was homeless. Literally begging you to help me find a home to put my kids to sleep at night. My biggest fear has always been Erie. I loaded the last of our things in a half paid storage unit days after Thanksgiving. As we drove away, I sobbed crying to God not knowing where we were going to lay our heads at night. I pulled into a local church because I saw someone in the parking lot. The man looked at me and he said, "Can I pray for you?" I didn't know this man, but I put my car in park and prayed that God would guide and protect us through whatever we were about to face. As I was pulling out of the parking lot to go nowhere specific, my phone rang and it was EUMA. The sweet voice said words I will never forget, **"You have a place to stay with us."** I never in a million years would have imagined that saying being homeless was the best thing that ever happened to me but here I am saying that I wouldn't be the person I am today without that experience. I struggled 14 years to believe in myself, I struggled with an abusive marriage and I struggled being a mom (even thought I did my absolute best).

I have learned to love myself and live my best possible life for my children and me. I can't thank EUMA (The Refuge staff) for everything you have done for us. You have changed our lives. Thank you.

All my love,
Beth & Children



End homelessness as Jesus would. Donate today:

Info@EUMA-erie.org

Visit our website at:

euma-erie.org



Thank you to all of our sponsors!



UPMC HEALTH PLAN

