



Anchorage Public Library Community Resource Coordinator 2019 Progress Report

The Community Resource Coordinator (CRC) is a grant-funded pilot project to help the Library's vulnerable patrons utilize services they qualify for such as housing, healthcare, behavioral health supports and job opportunities. The pilot began in September 2018 and will run through December 2020. We are currently working to transition it to a permanent municipal program.

OUTCOMES, JAN - DEC 2019

- **Service to patrons experiencing vulnerabilities: 510** one-on-one meetings with patrons experiencing vulnerabilities including homelessness, poverty, mental and behavioral health challenges:
 - Roughly 65% men 45% women
 - 22 people age 55+, 12 of those experiencing homelessness
- **Housing:**
 - **76** Coordinated Entry Assessments completed (beginning in June 2019); **18** individuals confirmed to have found housing; **3** additional individuals housed outside of Coord. Entry
 - **4** evictions prevented by referral to emergency rental assistance
 - **290** attendees in weekly Housing Labs, weekly, free open-house workshops for housing questions, specifically related to homelessness and evictions
 - **295** one-on-one consultations with APL patrons about housing needs
- **Food and utilities assistance: 67** assisted with SNAP and food pantry resources
- **Mental health referrals: 85** individuals assisted with mental health concerns, including de-escalation and crisis resolution, finding a counselor and connecting with low cost mental health supports
- **Substance misuse referrals: 4** individuals referred directly to SUD recovery services
- **Seniors: 40+** referrals to the Health Department's Aging and Disability Resource Center; **7** completed Senior Benefits applications
- **Job search assistance: 44** individuals assisted with resumes & job applications; **9** referrals to Div. of Vocational Rehabilitation; facilitated partnership with YWCA to provide Job Labs at Loussac & Mountain View Libraries
- **MSW Intern projects:** Veterans information area and harm reduction group pilot project

NEXT STEPS

- Private funding has been obtained to create the following in 2020:
 - An assistant community resource coordinator to serve Mountain View and Muldoon Libraries.
 - A peer navigator pilot program to provide additional outreach to patrons and test concepts for workforce development at the Library.
- Find a source of permanent funding to sustain the program beyond 2020.

SUCCESS STORIES

Max had been staying “around” for years, his disabilities making it impossible to work, and his addiction absorbing his Social Security income, making it impossible to afford housing. Through the CRC he was able to access a Coordinated Entry assessment, qualify for permanent supportive housing and meet regularly with a transition coordinator from the Coalition to End Homelessness to obtain permanent supportive housing. The CRC also helped him renew other benefits. Using a library computer, he independently found his own apartment. Having a contact at the Library meant that he did not fall off the radar during the long process of getting housing, and remained motivated to work through the emotional challenges of waiting for services.

A pilot program in March 2020 demonstrated that there is interest and engagement among vulnerable regulars at the Library to discuss substance use and safety, and to connect with resources. Adam Ward, MSW student intern, facilitated a successful group with 7 highly vulnerable individuals participating, all of whom either had previously or were currently experiencing substance use disorder and homelessness. In a low-barrier, no-judgement environment, the individuals engaged in discussion of the stigma they felt as a substance user, and experiencing homelessness, and the importance of trust, good information and hope to their recovery journeys. Adam conducted a survey of libraries across the country and provided recommendations on how APL can increase access to substance misuse resources for its patrons from all walks of life.

COLLABORATIONS

- UAA School of Social Work (MSW Interns)
- Anchorage Health Department
- Municipal Mobile Intervention Team
- Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness
- Supportive Services for Veteran Families (Catholic Social Services)
- SNAP Outreach
- Cooperative Extension Service SNAP Education program
- Cook Inlet Housing Authority
- Recover Alaska
- Alaska Mental Health Consumer Web
- Covenant House Alaska
- The Vet Center

FUNDERS

- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Recover Alaska
- Alaska Community Foundation, Social Justice Fund
- New for 2020: Rasmuson Foundation

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