



Central Arizona Shelter Services

**SHELTER. SUPPORT. CHANGE LIVES.**



## **Compassionate Community Solutions to Homelessness**

IMPACT REPORT 2022



**Our mission is to prevent and end homelessness among individuals and families while advancing compassionate community solutions.**

**Our vision is a community where everyone has a home.**

## A Year of Growth, Transformation and Advocacy to Address a Growing Housing and Homeless Crisis

Dear Friends and Partners:

The following CASS 2022 Annual Report shows rapid growth this year in our service numbers, in regional expansion, and in outcomes for those we serve.

**First, we saw 30% growth over the prior year in the numbers of individuals we served, totaling 6,658 people.** The vast majority of these persons stayed in our shelters, while others received case management or housing services either from referrals, or from utilization of our thriving navigation center in Glendale (the Norton and Ramsey Social Justice Empowerment Center). This report details where we have added new beds, opened new services, as well as what new beds and services will be coming on line in the coming year.

**Second, although Arizona continues to be deeply challenged by the lack of affordable housing, our teams successfully helped 1,262 people get back into housing, or remain in their housing.** And we are proud to have been one of the voices at the Arizona State Legislature to support a \$60 Million appropriation to the Arizona Housing Trust Fund which will help bring more low-income housing to communities statewide. We plan to keep up pressure on our elected officials to fund more housing, which is one way we will address the root causes of the continued spiraling growth in homelessness.

**Finally, outcomes are not just about service numbers, but also about how we serve people who have diverse needs, who have experienced trauma, and who have barriers that must be addressed before they can get housed (evictions, criminal records, job loss, poverty, mental health challenges).**

CASS' experienced case management and housing teams are trained to deliver trauma informed care; to work with people to address the barriers that may be keeping them unhoused; and to restore hope and belief in each person's ability to permanently end their homelessness. Every month, we have hundreds of success stories which we share among our teams in order to deepen our learning and continually strengthen our service model.

We are also proud to have created a better service model for our senior citizens experiencing homelessness, with new screening tools and new partnerships, all of which has resulted in a stronger safety net for this population. **In 2023, we will open a dedicated senior shelter – The CASS Senior Haven - with 170 beds at a hotel in North Phoenix.** And, to address the mental health challenges faced by many people experiencing homelessness, many of our staff are now trained and certified as behavioral health technicians, with many more being trained this year. **And in 2024, CASS will open a dedicated 54-bed housing program for people who have serious mental illness.** Our partner in that project, Copa Health, will operate the outpatient clinic.

**We are grateful to our supporters and partners for being with us on this journey as we work together to meet increasing demands, and, equally important, as we continue to transform community models of services to build stronger and better communities for all.**



Sincerely,  
Lisa Glow, J.D.  
President & CEO





## CASS Locations & Services

### **1** CASS' Downtown Single Adult Shelter, Phoenix (600 beds, 24/7 services)

Since 1984, we have worked tirelessly to end homelessness by providing shelter, case management, and housing services to more than 170,000 people. CASS' shelters are low-barrier, operating 24/7 under the Housing First model, meaning there are few preconditions to entry. CASS uses a progressive engagement case management model that delivers different levels of services and support depending on need. In the summer of 2022, the adult shelter bed count increased from 470 to 600 individuals in response to the increasing numbers of unsheltered homeless individuals.

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### **2** CASS' Family Shelter, Phoenix (Serving Families since 1984)

Our Vista Colina Family Shelter is a 30-unit converted apartment complex that shelters up to 36 families, or 120 to 150 adults and children, each night. More than 60% of the individuals we serve are children. As the second largest family emergency shelter in the Phoenix Metropolitan area, we utilize a low-barrier shelter model and a Housing First case management model. All families participate in case management services designed to address barriers to permanent housing. This includes help obtaining housing, employment, benefits, mental health services, healthcare, substance abuse services, pensions, legal assistance, advocacy, transportation, and more.

### **3** CASS' Norton and Ramsey Social Justice Empowerment Center, Glendale (A 'No Wrong Door' City Solution)

Our Norton and Ramsey Social Justice Empowerment Center (NREC) operates as a hub for homeless, housing, and related service providers to work collaboratively and coordinate resources. Though we do not provide shelter at this location, we provide individualized solutions and support services to an average of 500 people monthly. CASS also operates a 24/7 Glendale hotline with a 100% response rate. Through a partnership with the City of Glendale as their Master Service Provider, more than 15 collaborative providers bring their resources to support West Valley residents at risk of losing or having lost their homes.



## 4 CASS' Senior Haven – Opening 2023, Phoenix

(Addressing the homeless Silver Tsunami)

The need for senior-specific services is growing, and CASS strives to ensure that underserved homeless seniors are supported in the greater Phoenix community with dignity, honor, and respect. Our new, permanent emergency senior shelter is in the process of major renovations, with a target of opening in 2023. The Haven will serve up to 170 seniors each day and night. And, with an estimated 70-day average length of stay, we project serving 500 or more seniors annually after it opens.



## 5 CASS and Copa Health SMI Transitional Housing – Opening 2024, Phoenix

(A New and Better Service Model)

The majority of homeless shelters and transitional facilities do not have an adequate operational infrastructure to effectively serve persons with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) or SMI status, as well as comorbid medical conditions and substance use disorders. To respond to this critical gap in care, CASS will open a dedicated 54-bed SMI shelter in partnership with Copa Health, who will operate the outpatient clinic. This project will be funded with an award from the State of Arizona.



Phoenix Metropolitan Area

# A Picture of Homelessness in Maricopa County



Homelessness has reached crisis levels in Arizona, and people experiencing homelessness continue to be disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. According to the 2022 Maricopa Regional Point-In-Time Homeless Count (MAG PIT Count), the **unsheltered count in Maricopa County increased 34% between 2020 and 2022**, above an already-high steady average of 25% annually in years prior.

How did we get here? Arizona has one of the highest housing loss rates in the country and Maricopa County has an eviction rate of nearly twice the national average (ASU, 2022). Rental

costs have increased dramatically along with the meteoric rise in housing prices. **This affects a large percentage of Arizona residents, with 14.1% of individuals living below the poverty line (U.S. Census, 2020).** The Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity reports that 22% of jobs in Arizona are low wage, meaning that many Arizonans are unable to make a living wage. Because so many of our neighbors were already one emergency or rental increase away from homelessness, coupled with the expiration of COVID-19 eviction protections, the need for emergency shelter has increased dramatically in Maricopa County.

34%

The number of unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness in Maricopa County has increased 34% from 2020 to 2022 (MAG PIT).

30%

Rental prices shot up almost 30% in the Phoenix area in 2021, more than double the national increase (AZ Republic).

50%

Of the unsheltered individuals in Arizona, 50% are over the age of 50 (AZ Town Hall).

## The Top 5 Reasons for Homelessness:

- 1 Lack of affordable housing
- 2 Unemployment
- 3 Poverty
- 4 Mental illness and lack of needed services
- 5 Substance abuse and lack of needed services

*National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty*

## EVERY NIGHT, MORE THAN 5,000 INDIVIDUALS ARE UNSHELTERED

More than 9,000 people experience homelessness in Maricopa County every night. CASS provided beds and services for over 6,600 adults and family members last year, and more than 1,200 of those individuals were helped to either remain in their housing or be rehoused or reunited with family.



# CASS' Community Impact 2022

From July 2021 to June 2022, CASS provided the following shelter and supportive services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness:

**6,658**

unduplicated individuals served,

**an increase of 30%** over the prior year

**5,051** utilized our shelter services, for a total of

**231,492** bed nights provided

**2,203** utilized case management support

**6,119** created a housing plan

**1,262** utilized Rapid Rehousing, eviction prevention and financial assistance support services

Founded in 1984 to address a homelessness crisis in Phoenix, CASS is Arizona's largest, longest-serving, and most experienced emergency shelter provider, annually serving thousands of adults and families with shelter, a four-tiered case management program, and a full array of housing services (eviction prevention, rapid rehousing, and flexible financial assistance). **Our adult and family shelters operate at full capacity 24/7, 365 days a year.**

Because our mission is to end homelessness, our shelter model is much more than just a place to sleep. Our trauma-informed model is effective because we provide wrap-around support services to stabilize our clients, help them find employment, address their health care and/or disability needs, and move into permanent housing. Our intensive case management services help our clients secure critical resources such as housing, employment, benefits, mental health services, health care, substance abuse treatment, and legal assistance. Additional services provided include Rapid Rehousing

assistance, flexible financial assistance, employment support, assistance with finance and budgeting, hygiene kits, a clothing bank, and move-out kits.

**There is no stereotype for homelessness. Our neighbors experiencing homelessness come from a vast diversity of life experiences. Here is an overall picture of the neighbors we cared for this last year:**

**21%** were first-time homeless

**26%** were 55 years or older

**35%** were chronically homeless (according to HUD definition)

**62%** were male, **37%** female and **1%** transgender/nonbinary

**55%** were White, **37%** Black, **6%** American Indian, **1%** Asian,

**1%** Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; **25%** of all clients were Hispanic

**55%** reported one or more disabling condition

**21%** reported a history of or were fleeing domestic violence

**40%** stayed in hotels or places not meant for habitation

# Seniors

The need for senior-specific services is growing, and CASS strives to ensure that underserved homeless seniors are supported by our community with dignity, honor, and respect. In the early 1990s, only 11 percent of the adult homeless population was age fifty and over. The 2020 Homelessness in Arizona Annual Report published by the Department of Economic Security reported that **50% of individuals who are experiencing homelessness in Arizona were over the age of 50.**

Many of our community's homeless seniors are first-time homeless and in most cases they 'did everything right' prior to their retirement, but their dollars aren't stretching far enough as inflation and rental costs drastically increase. Waiting lists for senior-subsidized housing have 2–3-year waits, and many elderly women coming into our shelter are facing additional challenges, such as abuse and extreme poverty.

CASS has created senior-focused programming, enhancing our service model for senior citizens experiencing homelessness,



with new screening tools and new partnerships, all of which has resulted in a stronger safety net for this population. **CASS is on track to open Haven senior shelter in summer 2023, which will serve up to 170 seniors nightly.**

**1,717** seniors served (ages 55+) — an increase of **43%** over the prior year  
**1,459** seniors utilized our shelter services, for a total of **144,720** bed nights provided  
 Of those served, **821** were 62 years or older



- 24%** were first-time homeless
- 47%** were chronically homeless (according to HUD definition)
- 29%** utilized case management support
- 67%** were male, **32%** female and **1%** transgender/nonbinary
- 78%** reported one or more disabling condition
  - 18%** reported mental health issues
  - 24%** reported chronic health conditions
  - 24%** reported physical disabilities
- 19%** reported a history of or were presently fleeing domestic violence
- 40%** stayed in hotels or places not meant for habitation
- 58%** were employed or had some form of income upon arrival
- 73%** graduated high school or equivalent



## Families

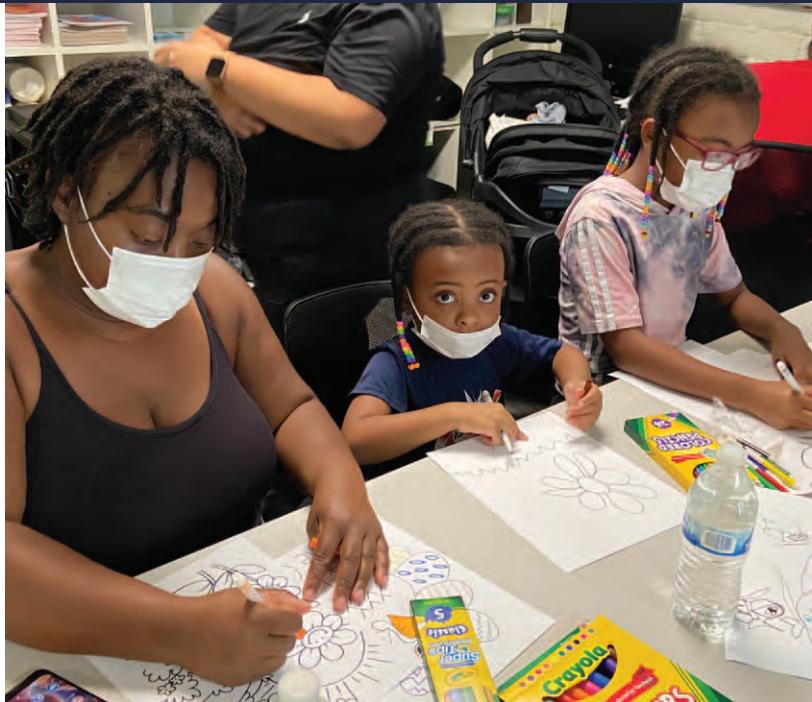
Children face devastating challenges when they lose their home. The resulting fear and unpredictability can damage their development and ability to learn (Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness). Children impacted by homelessness also have higher levels of behavioral problems, increased risk of health problems, and are more likely to show lower academic performance, repeat a grade, or drop out of school. Family homelessness disproportionately impacts women and people of color, who also face additional societal and cultural challenges.

CASS' Family Shelter is the second largest family shelter in the Phoenix Metropolitan area. All families participate in case management services designed to address barriers to permanent housing. Our 30 apartment units were recently renovated thanks to the City of Phoenix.

**377** family members served from a total of **93** families  
**36,169** nights of shelter provided

- 100%** utilized case management support
- 22%** of heads of household reported one or more disabling conditions
- 70%** of heads of household graduated high school or equivalent
- 38%** of heads of household were employed or had income upon arrival
- 32%** reported a history of or were presently fleeing domestic violence
- 18%** stayed in hotels or places not meant for habitation prior to their arrival

Of **243** children served, **96** were under the age of **5 years old**.



# Veterans

In Arizona, more than 34,000 veterans live in poverty and are at an elevated risk of homelessness (Housing Assistance Council). As the lowest barrier veteran's shelter program in the community, CASS shelters many of the most elderly and disabled veterans. CASS' veterans' program is designed to help veterans move from homelessness to self-sufficiency by obtaining needed benefits, employment and job training, and permanent housing.

In the last year, we served the following veterans with shelter and supportive services:



**287** veterans served — an increase of **45%** over the prior year  
**7,824** nights of shelter were provided to our veterans  
**48%** were chronically homeless and **58%** were 55 years or older



**90%** were male, **9%** female and **1%** transgender/nonbinary  
**24%** were first-time homeless  
**18%** utilized case management support  
**77%** reported one or more disabling condition  
     **21%** reported mental health issues  
     **17%** reported chronic health conditions  
     **20%** reported substance abuse issues  
     **19%** reported physical disabilities  
**48%** stayed in hotels or places not meant for habitation  
**11%** reported a history of or were fleeing domestic violence  
**90%** graduated from high school or equivalent

## Young Adults

Young adults, ages 18-24, experiencing homelessness, particularly those who are unaccompanied or who have run away, continue to be a significant concern in the face of homelessness. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, 50% of homeless youth are unsheltered—sleeping outside, in a car, or places not meant for human habitation. Young adults need stable housing, supportive connections to caring adults, and access to services that will help place them on a path to long-term success. At CASS, specially trained case managers provide services and resources with the goal of getting them on their feet and out of homelessness as quickly as possible.

In the last year, we served the following young adults with shelter and supportive services:

**423** young adults served — an increase of **39%** over the prior year  
**24%** were first-time homeless  
**18%** were chronically homeless\* (*according to HUD definition*)

**31%** utilized case management support  
**59%** were male, **39%** female and **2%** transgender/nonbinary  
**38%** reported one or more disabling condition  
**39%** stayed in hotels or places not meant for habitation prior to their arrival  
**23%** reported a history of or were presently fleeing domestic violence  
**57%** graduated from high school or equivalent  
**32%** were employed or had some form of income upon arrival

\*Defined as having a disability combined with 12 months or more of homelessness in the past 3 years. Quite a high number for such a young population.



# Chronic Homelessness

An individual is considered chronically homeless when they have experienced homelessness for at least a year — or repeatedly — while struggling with a disabling condition such as a mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability.

According to the Morrison Institute, mental illness, substance use, and homelessness often exist in a vicious cycle, where one contributes to the others, making escape very difficult.

In 2024, CASS will be opening a new shelter, in partnership with Copa Health, that will respond to this critical gap in care. The dedicated 54-bed housing program will serve persons with Severe Mental Illness (SMI), as well as comorbid medical conditions and substance use disorders.



**2,317** chronically homeless individuals served — an increase of **77%** over the prior year  
**Of those, 876** were senior citizens (age 55+)  
**26%** utilized case management support



In the last year, we served the following chronically homeless individuals with shelter and supportive services:

**67%** were male, **32%** female and **1%** transgender/nonbinary

**100%** reported one or more disabling condition

**28%** reported mental health issues

**23%** reported chronic health conditions

**25%** reported substance abuse issues

**19%** reported physical disabilities

**48%** stayed in hotels or places not meant for habitation prior to their arrival

**27%** reported a history of or were presently fleeing domestic violence

**69%** graduated from high school or equivalent

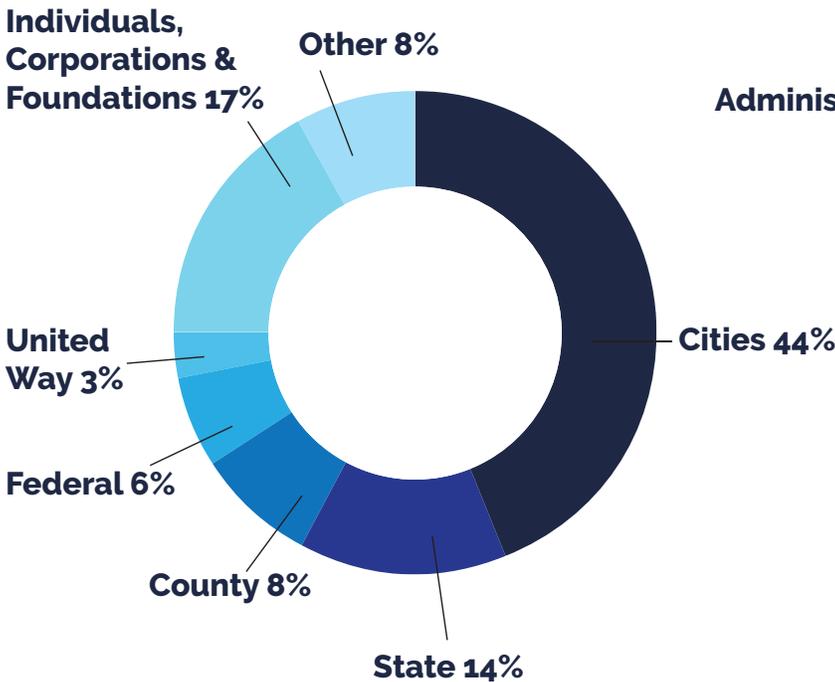
# Funding Fiscal Year Ending 6/30/22

CASS' funding model focuses on both sustaining current programming and growing innovative solutions through our diverse portfolio of funders. CASS intends to continue its work with collaborative funders to achieve this, building on the success of the past 38 years managing complex and multiple government and private funding sources. In recent years, CASS' financial revenue sources varied greatly from prior years due to government funding coming available in response to

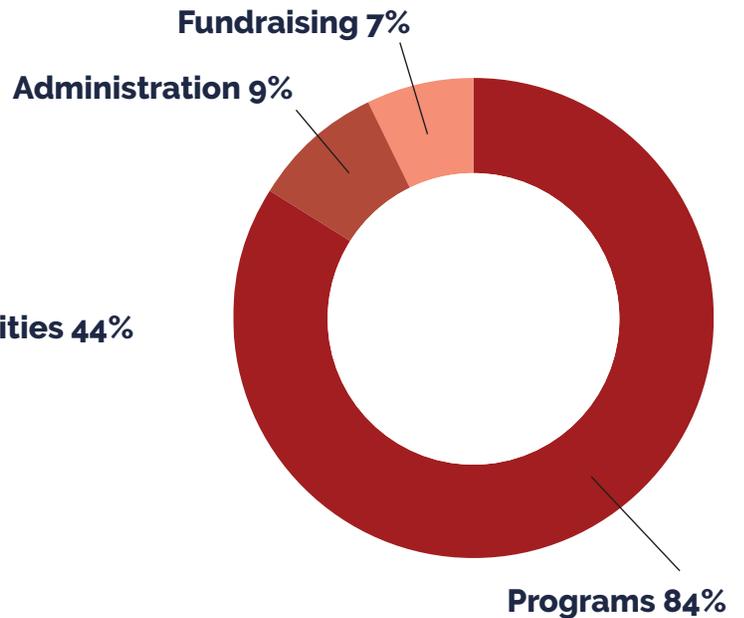
the pandemic. Additional support came from foundations and individuals to whom we are incredibly grateful.

CASS prides itself on being a good steward of government, foundation, corporate, and individual donations, with 84% of agency funds directly supporting services for those experiencing homelessness.

## Funding Sources



## Functional Expenses



Programs: **\$10,720,468**

Administration: **\$1,202,009**

Fundraising: **\$942,736**

**Total: \$12,865,213**

**84 cents of every dollar donated goes directly to benefit programs**



## CASS Stories of Success

### Mike finds permanent housing with support from CASS' Downtown Shelter

Mike is a 63-year-old African American senior citizen who was chronically homeless. After being assigned to work with one of CASS' intensive case managers, Mike was guided toward connection with supportive services. Mike's case manager assisted him with scheduling medical appointments and submitting applications to several senior living facilities. Unfortunately, Mike's applications for housing were all denied due to his extensive criminal background. Undeterred, Mike and his case manager submitted applications for residency at shared living space properties, but, again, each of Mike's applications was met with a denial. At this point, Mike was beginning to give up hope. Then, the opportunity arose for Mike to be referred for a HUD Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV). Mike's application underwent meticulous review by HUD and other supportive agencies before he was granted a voucher. With the EHV to aid him in his pursuit of housing, Mike was finally able to locate an apartment complex willing to accept him as a tenant. Mike signed the lease for his new apartment. Keys to his unit in hand, Mike expressed gratitude to his case manager for her assistance and proclaimed his eagerness to move in and his determination not to squander this opportunity to live independently. Mike also thanked CASS for providing shelter and for the compassionate understanding with which staff treated his experience of homelessness and barriers to housing.

### Lillian avoided homelessness thanks to support from CASS' Glendale Center

Lillian is a 74-year-old Hispanic senior who sought assistance from the CASS Norton and Ramsey Social Justice Empowerment Center (NREC) when her rental home of the past 12 years was sold. This abrupt displacement from her housing put Lilly in jeopardy of becoming homeless. Working together, Lilly and her CASS case manager were able to contact the owner of the house and the home buyer, both of whom agreed to defer the date by which Lilly would have to move out. Buying extra time was critical because Lilly earns her income as an in-home childcare provider, and many rental properties have policies barring the performance of daycare services within their units. For this reason, Lilly's search for a new home progressed slowly, as she struggled to find a property that would allow her to continue performing her work. Eventually, Lilly was able to secure approval for a two-bedroom apartment in which she could provide in-home childcare. With her move to the new apartment imminent, Lilly needed to pause her work as a DES childcare provider until the new apartment passed inspection. This temporary hiatus from her work left Lilly deprived of the majority of her income during this period. Though Lilly had the majority of the money to cover her move-in costs put aside, she still needed assistance to satisfy the full amount. Fortunately, CASS was able to provide Lilly with the one-time move-in assistance she required, clearing the last barrier on the path toward her move to a new apartment, so that she would avoid homelessness altogether.

*"I got here Jan 15th in shock. Angry. But these people took me in... They didn't treat us with any type of condemnation, no judgment, no anything and they knew that we were going through it but they treated us with such care and love. Something that I wasn't able to receive nor give because I lost my trust in human kindness. But they restored that for me here. They don't judge you here. It's a no judgment zone. And they love you here until you can begin to love yourself again."*

*-Vanessa, African American senior female, never before homeless*



*Thank you to our friends and supporters! Special thank you to Scott Seligman for donating his time and talent to the design of this report.*

## Amy's family avoids homelessness through CASS' homeless prevention assistance

Amy is a 41-year-old mother who lost her employment when she and her 14-year-old daughter contracted COVID-19. Since Amy had not yet completed the 90-day probationary period at her job when she and her daughter became ill, she was not permitted to take extended sick leave. Consequently, her employment was terminated when she took the necessary measure and went on leave from work to protect herself, her daughter, and coworkers. After losing her job, Amy fell behind on rent for two months. Through one of several grants for flexible one-time assistance that CASS has been awarded, the CASS housing team was able to provide Amy with funds that were sufficient to cover the equivalent of one and a half months' worth of her rent in arrears. Aided with this homeless prevention assistance, Amy was confident she would be able to arrange to cover the remainder of her balance in default and keep her daughter and herself safe from eviction. With a new job set to start, Amy expressed a feeling of gratefulness for having been supplied with the additional resources from CASS that offered the extra boost she required to overcome an unanticipated financial crisis and keep her family housed.

## Carol is heading into new career with help from CASS

Carol is a 38-year-old woman who came to CASS in March after losing her job and becoming homeless. She is originally from Paradise Valley and had lost contact with all of her family. Carol came to case management appointments expressing a strong desire to find a program through which she could complete CDL training, with the aim of beginning a new career as a commercial vehicle driver. With support from her case manager, Carol was able to enroll in a driving training program and complete all classwork. Now, Carol has her CDL learner's permit and can start the hands-on driving portion of the program. Carol was excited upon arriving to her most recent case meeting, as she had just received a job offer in Dallas. The company is offering to help Carol finish her training, relocate her to Dallas, and provide her with a guaranteed position upon completion of training.

## Max finds housing through CASS' Rapid Re-Housing Program that meets his needs

Max is a 61-year-old disabled single adult who lives with significant hearing impairment. During his stay at CASS, Max was referred to the CASS Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) program. With no case managers on the RRH team proficient in ASL (American Sign Language), Max and his assigned RRH case manager initially struggled to communicate. To overcome this hindrance, Max and his case manager employed makeshift means of communication via writing, ranging from typing messages to marking out their discussions on a white board. Max shared with his case manager that his preferred means of communication is to utilize an interpreter via video chat, which requires internet access. Max's phone and tablet were only capable of picking up a weak internet connection at CASS, rendering such video calls technically infeasible. Max expressed concern that he could completely lose the ability to communicate effectively with the outside world once housed alone in an apartment, unless he had a reliable internet connection. With the assistance of his case manager, Max was able to sign a lease and move into an apartment. Max initially had to make do without internet service, but Max and his case manager finally managed to have internet services connected to his apartment. With fast and stable internet connection, Max could now be assured that he would be able to communicate with his case manager and others in the manner that he finds most comfortable.



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## How You Can Help

### DONATE

- Online at [cassaz.org](http://cassaz.org), or mail your donation to CASS (P.O. Box 18250, Phoenix, AZ 85005)
- Choose CASS for your Arizona Charitable Tax Credit (up to \$400 for individuals, \$800 per couple)
- Become a monthly donor
- Direct your donor-advised fund to CASS
- Transfer cryptocurrency or stock donations online

**LEAVE A LEGACY** and choose CASS as a beneficiary of your will or estate plan

**ENCOURAGE** your company or foundation to make a donation or match your gift

**LIKE US** on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram

**HOST** a drive or purchase items from our wishlist

**VOLUNTEER or TOUR** any of our shelters

**[www.CASSAZ.org](http://www.CASSAZ.org)**

**602.417.9800**