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October 31, 2019

**LINK OF HAMPTON ROADS, INC
10413 Warwick Blvd., Newport News, VA 23601**

ANNUAL REPORT JULY 1, 2018 – JUNE 30, 2019

LINK's Mission Statement

Linking community resources to provide fast and affordable housing solutions to homeless individuals/families as well as other emergency services to men, women and children who don't have access to their basic needs and find themselves in a housing crisis or other emergency situation.

LINK of Hampton Roads (LINK) focuses on service provision to citizens that are experiencing homelessness and the effects of poverty. Agency customers are individuals (including the elderly,) with physical and/or mental disabilities and other illness ranging from post-operative recovery to terminal illnesses. Additionally, LINK provides basic, life-essential resources to in house clients and the general public. LINK is about to enter our 29th year of existence on December 8, 2019.

Fiscal year 2018/2019 continued to present many opportunities for LINK, our interfaith partners and other non-profits to come together to help meet the needs of Virginia Peninsula citizens. LINK provided the at-risk and homeless community with housing, shelter, food, clothing, furniture and household items. Partnering and exchanging information increased our ability to track, refer, and accomplish these goals. The Housing Crisis Hotline has and continues to be the centralized intake system as required by HUD for funding and for the hundreds of persons who are experiencing homelessness on the Peninsula and Southside.

LINK is overseen by an up to 23 person Board of Directors. Personnel include an executive director, program director, finance manager, program manager, administrative assistant and operations manager. Support services are delivered via two and a half case managers for permanent housing, one three quarter time case manager for medical respite, and up to two house managers for veterans' emergency shelter. LINK subcontracts with Family Centered Resources who provide the CNA, LPN and RN for our Medical Respite Program. LINK also partners with interfaith, civic and business communities; whose volunteer support remains essential to our mission!

Cash and other donations are utilized strictly for direct services to programs. LINK remains dedicated to being good stewards of all "gifts". Grant funded programs are audited annually by the granting agencies. LINK is also independently audited to A133 level to ensure checks and balances are in place and grant funds are utilized strictly for the purposes intended, no issues were found of the 2017 audit conducted in 2018 and the 2018 audit is about to commence in November 2019.

CANLINK PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAMS (I AND IV)

LINK continues to operate two permanent supportive housing programs. The projects provide subsidized housing and support services to individuals and/or families via HUD funding. Eligible applicants must have a head of household with a disability that meets HUD specifications. The required match monies are donated by the United Way and community donors to support various supportive services that are essential to the success of program participants.

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CANLINK programs house chronically homeless persons living with mental and physical or co-occurring disabilities. Participants are not excluded due to criminal histories, poor credit or lack of income. Clients were initially referred to CANLINK programs through LINK's PORT winter shelter and other Peninsula community agencies. Currently, all clients enter services through the Housing Crisis Hotline and all referrals are screened at a local meeting of service providers for eligibility and prioritization. Referrals are managed by a waiting list and applicants are housed when a vacancy becomes available. This year 83 individuals/families were served. Three deaths occurred this year. 49 households were provided with food on an ongoing basis throughout the year and 17 families received assistance from Share the Spirit to include Christmas and Thanksgiving dinners, gifts for children/babies. Ongoing bus passes for medical and other appointments. Regular transportation is provided to all clients in CANLINK and are accompanied by a case worker, usually. Home visits monthly, home inspections every three months, support to access employment, mental health counseling, substance use interventions are ongoing/as needed. Food and furniture delivery is provided on a weekly/ongoing basis as needed.

This fiscal year, LINK applied for an additional \$98,000 for an extension to CANLINK I which will initially add another 7 single units in August, 2020.

CANLINK programs directly provide rental subsidies, case management and support services. Additionally, community service agencies provide an array of individualized, client centered services to address needs and supports to foster housing stabilization. During intake, the Program Director completes a psych-social assessment to evaluate existing supports, strengths, and needs. Based on these identified strengths and needs, a service plan is developed by the client and case manager to establish goals toward housing stability. This plan serves as the tool to monitor client progress and agency responsibilities. The service plan also addresses HUD's main project goals of increased income and greater self-determination. When a client meets stabilization goals the case manager and client develop an exit strategy that includes linkages to necessary support resources. If a client requires ongoing support to live independently, the housing subsidy and case management are maintained.

Case management services also involve working with the children CANLINK. Case managers work with families to teach and monitor parenting skills. Community educational outings are regularly organized for the children. Parental support is provided in negotiating the school system when needed. Contact is maintained with teachers, counselors and administrators. Grades and attendance are monitored, and behavioral challenges (if any) are addressed as an essential function of CANLINK family services.

CANLINK IV was developed to support up to 7 chronically homeless veterans and/or ex-offenders providing the same services as the CANLINK I program.

Many CANLINK participants have either zero income or manage on very limited income. Therefore LINK's ongoing support from Emergency Services is imperative. Each household is regularly supplied with clothing, furniture, essential household items and food on an as needed basis. These resources are made available via the support of the United Way of the Virginia Peninsula, local interfaith congregations and civic and business groups. These groups generously volunteer and donate to LINK. Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University and Thomas Nelson Community College provide annual Bachelor or Masters level interns who provide "boots on the ground" support, much needed by case management staff. Without all of the support received, these services would be impossible! Seven persons were served in CANLINK IV throughout the year with duplicated food delivery,

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CANLINK programs continue to facilitate a quarterly resident forum and support groups. These meetings address landlord/tenant issues and resident concerns/interests to ensure a consumer relevant service delivery system.

Unfortunately, there have been several clients diagnosed with significant health issues again this year, one entered hospice and two clients have passed away. This in part may be due to the aging populations entering services. Three CANLINK residents passed away. While it is always a shock for LINK to lose even one client, we, the staff, were most grateful that we were able to provide housing versus the alternative of persons dying unsheltered/on the streets.

PORT EMERGENCY WINTER SHELTER PROGRAM

PORT continues to be one of the largest and most innovative emergency shelter efforts on the Peninsula. PORT provides a continuum of comprehensive services to homeless men, women and children. PORT guests are a diverse population, often experiencing complex challenges and special needs. Guests present with issues of mental illness, substance abuse, health concerns and various educational and financial crises. Sadly, the elderly population is becoming a more frequent guest of the PORT program due to lack of income and resources. As a result, guests are routinely assisted with applying for mainstream benefits such as Social Security Income or Social Security Disability Income, Medicaid, SNAP benefits, WIC, Temporary Aid for Needy Families, or Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare, and employment placement. This year LINK's statistical data continues to support an increasing trend of elderly, medically fragile, and young adults presenting at the shelter. Shelter staff continues to successfully house seniors in either assisted living facilities or other permanent housing.

PORT completes an intake on each client that enters the program and ensures that every person has hygiene items, a minimum of two hot meals, bagged lunches, clothing, and diapers (if needed). If a guest is transitioning into housing, furniture is provided and needed community referrals and linkages are made. PORT clients are "followed" to measure their success and/or challenges throughout the PORT season. Guests may also access haircuts, showers (provided by The Baptist Associations portable shower unit) and NA and AA meetings. On-site employment assistance is also available to include: assistance with obtaining identification, employment counseling, resume development, and job placement.

Under contract with the city of Newport News, Hampton-Newport News Community Services Board staff are on-site twice weekly to offer mental health assistance to those who wish to engage. Southeastern Virginia Health System (PICH) offers on-site medical services for those in need of ongoing healthcare and prescription medications. Newport News Department of Human Services (NN-DHS) intake workers are available to conduct emergency, on-site family screening services nightly via telephone. Each new family with children is offered the opportunity of a next day appointment (except on weekends/holidays) with DHS to immediately begin addressing the needs of the family in crisis. Veterans Administration personnel visit weekly to ensure our Veterans are accessing all available resources. The Newport News Sheriff's Department provides on-site security, ensuring that the shelter is properly secured and our guests, staff and volunteers remain safe.

Many nights the shelter provides care for over 100 persons. A total of 9,001 bed nights were provided to 516 unduplicated men, women and children at twenty interfaith church sites. More than 9,000 volunteers

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provided meals and transported food and supplies to each site. Ninety two interfaith, civic groups, businesses, and universities participated in ensuring that PORT was provided with sufficient resources to ensure a smooth transfer on a weekly basis for 20 weeks.

Veterans Emergency Housing Program (Male Only)

The Veterans Emergency Housing Program provides rehabilitative services to veterans. Two house managers and Veterans Administration (VA) staff provide onsite supervision, daily transportation and program oversight. Services provided this year included short-term housing, case management and job assistance to male veterans in need of rehabilitative care that are experiencing homelessness. LINK provides food, transportation and supportive services for each veteran accepted into the housing program. Intensive case management is the cornerstone in assisting these veterans with housing stabilization during their limited stay. Each veteran has an individual care plan and access to resources and supports for reintegration into community living. LINK and the Veterans Administration offer basic life skill development, employment training and placement. Physical fitness programs and ongoing support to ensure successful reentry into civilian life are also available. When veterans transition to the community, LINK's emergency service programs provide ongoing food, clothing, furniture, and household items to each veteran on an as needed basis. In 2018/2019 this program successfully served 72 male veterans, with 1,822 bed nights, and all exited but one person exited to community homes, permanent housing, VA supportive housing programs, or CANLINK I or IV. As with all of LINK's programs veterans are provided three full meals, snacks, clothing as needed and furniture if needed upon exit.

Grateful thanks to two of LINK's oldest interfaith member churches who provide volunteers to ensure that veteran house gardens are well kept, arranged annual cook-outs and scheduled fishing trips.

Veterans Medical Respite Program (Male only)

In 2010, LINK had the honor of being granted and implementing the first east coast pilot project for medical respite in the United States. The second Veterans Medical Respite pilot is located on the west coast in California!

LINK runs the Veterans Medical Respite program in close partnership with the Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC), along with Family Centered Resources, a Home Health local business that ensures that CNA/LPN/RNs provide 24/7 care. LINK provides food, transportation and supportive services for each veteran placed with the medical respite project, along with needed personal supplies during their stay. LINK also serves as the VAMC liaison, ensuring that our veterans receive medical care and other services needed. Many veterans entering the program are either pre or post-op. Veterans are provided with supports and services necessary to stabilize from surgical procedures or recover from serious medical conditions. In 2018/2019 this program successfully served 37 male veterans, with 948 bed nights. All veterans were housed, except one, upon discharge from Veterans Medical Respite. Veterans are placed into VA Medical Foster Care, assisted living, and permanent supportive housing through VASH or CANLINK, or private landlord housing as financially able. As with all of LINK's programs veterans are provided with ongoing food, clothing, furniture, and household items as needed, during the program and when they move into housing.

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Emergency Services

Food, Furniture, House Hold Items, Clothing, Job Search, Job Placement, Housing Placement, Medication Assistance etc.

The Center, located at the LINK building, provides resources for thousands of individuals and families either on a one-time or most often on a revolving basis, depending on the client's circumstances and vulnerability. Available resources include funds for emergency gas fill ups, medications, transportation in the form of LINK vehicles, HRT bus passes, or Greyhound tickets. These supports are made possible via collaboration with other agencies, interfaith churches and the United Way of the Virginia Peninsula.

Food

The Pantry provides perishable and non-perishable foods to individuals and families in need. Staff and volunteers have also expanded services to include regular delivery of food to shut-ins. Occasionally, persons who are unable to get to the LINK office due to disabilities, medical fragility or other challenges are also provided with delivery service. LINK has identified the need and advocated for development of increased community delivery resources of donated food to indigent, non-elderly, homebound citizens.

As a member of the homeless services access network, LINK provides referrals to Newport News DHS for SNAP benefits. The agency also directly distributes foods that are easy to open and eat until food stamps are awarded, or to fill the "gap" when food stamps run out. United Way's First Call for Help utilizes a database to track the number of citizens in need of food on a monthly basis. Utilization of this free service has assisted many agencies in avoiding duplication and abuse of limited food donation resources. LINK has been affected by the economic downturn and food request demands have continued to increase. The Food Bank, LINK's main source of purchasing food, has also been affected. Food quantities and choices have frequently been limited to certain items; additionally, 1674 unduplicated persons were provided with food throughout the year, either through onsite shopping at LINK or received home deliveries.

Clothing

LINK's clothing closet provides attire to adults, children and infants. Clothing is provided for various purposes such as seasonal appropriateness, professional presentation and to persons who are homeless and have no other resource to clean clothing. The PORT shelter distributes an inordinate amount of coats, jeans, sweaters, t-shirts, underwear, socks, boots, etc. PORT guests oftentimes will also access LINK's clothing closet to supplement their clothing in order to stay warm by layering, during the coldest parts of the winter.

Thanks to close ties with the interfaith communities and civic and business groups, donations of clothing and other items are often in abundance. LINK also helps to "spread the wealth" of clothing donations to other agencies that have the ability to distribute free clothing. Community agencies and the Veterans Administration are aware of LINK's clothing resources. Social workers frequently bring whole families or individuals to LINK to "shop" for clothing needs. Local elementary schools, middle schools, and Newport News Dept. of Human Services also receive clothing specifically for distribution to children. LINK also helps distribute clothing not accessed by the public to churches who send clothing to other countries, thus the wealth in the "clothing" world is spread far and wide; 3,947 unduplicated persons received direct clothing from LINK throughout the year, this does NOT include clothing distributed at the PORT winter shelter.

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Furniture and Household Distribution

LINK's storage is conveniently located near the LINK building. The storage contains household items and furniture for distribution to community households transitioning from homelessness. Local churches and other donors provide LINK with a complete array of household necessities. At any one time, LINK has enough furniture and household items to fully equip twelve (12) homes. LINK works directly with multiple agencies to address community furniture and household needs. Some of those agencies are the Veterans Administration, Departments of Human Services, the Red Cross, and various citizens referred by United Way First Call for Help, Mission United, etc. Many who lose furniture due to fires, floods, evictions, etc., also benefit from the wealth of donations stored at the LINK warehouse. Donations are picked up three to four times a week from community donors. Inventory is then documented and distributed freely; 674 persons received furniture from LINK which was either picked up from the LINK warehouse or was delivered by LINK staff.

Emergency Services/Share the Spirit

The Share the Spirit Program began 26 years ago and continues today to provide families experiencing the effects of poverty with gifts of food, clothing and toys during the Thanksgiving and Christmas Season. LINK's donors "adopt" a LINK known family and provide some of the things on the child (ren's) wish list. LINK, with the donors, ensures that each family has a Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner with all the fixings! Twenty four families total received gifts through Share the Spirit in 2018/2019.

Volunteer Program

LINK could not survive without the thousands of volunteers who work within our programs. Volunteers are the "backbone" of this agency. Without volunteers, LINK would not be able to provide the myriad of services that are donated free of charge, particularly the PORT winter shelter!

Volunteers come in the form of interns from ODU, Norfolk State and Christopher Newport Universities. Additionally, local colleges such as Centura and Thomas Nelson, who also provide volunteer support. The Federal Half Way House, Probation and Parole, the Newport News Dept. of Human Services TANF and VIEW workers are invaluable in keeping LINK offices and operations functioning smoothly. AARP volunteers also assist with the day to day running of the agency! LINK's main volunteer "heartbeat" is the interfaith congregations of the Peninsula!

In particular during this fiscal year, Kirkwood Presbyterian and Temple Baptist have provided outings, socialization opportunities, delivered home cooked meals and companionship to our Veterans Emergency Shelter and Medical Respite Programs, and our veteran clients are so appreciative of the special attention they have received through these avenues of wonderful extras!

The Board of Directors and the interfaith-based community are the AXIS upon which LINK revolves and survives. The generosity of all persons who represent the faith-based community and other public agencies come together in order to ensure that LINK's clients – men, women and children are provided with the support and assistance necessary for stabilization of their life situations. We celebrate another year of service to the Hampton Roads community.