Appreciation for Donations of Supplies and Time
MACH’s Housing Assistance and Street Outreach programs are consistently encouraged by donors of all kinds. Several organizations have recently gifted food and cleaning supplies to fill the pantries and cabinets of families who are settling in to apartments and homes after a period of homelessness. This provides and extra boost to households in financial strain. In-kind donations of non-perishable food, bottled water, hygiene kits and bed rolls also assist MACH program staff to provide some comfort to those living without shelter. Keeping these donations organized has been supported by volunteers who give of their valuable time. MACH would like to publicly thank the following people and organizations who have made such from January through May of 2022:

- Trinity Presbyterian Church – hygiene kits
- The Law Office of Sandra Lewis – pantry food
- Ms. Cleo Daniel & Family – outreach food, hygiene items
- First United Methodist Church – bottled water, hygiene items
- Turenne Pharmedco – cleaning supplies
- Montgomery Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority – cleaning supplies
- Freshman Leadership Initiative of Huntingdon College – clothes
- Dalraida UMC’s Homeless Mats Ministry – sleeping mats
- Bethel Baptist Church of Fort Deposit – socks
- Thelma Baptist Church – socks
- Nelson Cook – hygiene items
- Bridget Jones & Alabama Department of Transportation – hygiene items
- Southern Orthopedic Surgeons – hygiene items, sleeping bags
- Hutchinson Missionary Baptist Church Youth Ministry – cleaning supplies
- Lynda Waterman – cleaning supplies
- Ronald Williams – clothes
- Diane McFarland – clothes
- Kraig Smith – clothes
- Malcolm Brassell – bedding
- Charity Hyman – food, medical supplies
- Knights of Peter Claver/Ladies of Grace, Chapter 30 – clothes and blankets
- Twyla & Jonathon Jackson, Cheryl Newton, Jeanne Polis & Laura Wright – time

Montgomery Task Force on Homelessness
Newly organized by the City of Montgomery, the Task Force will attempt to create and implement an intensive response to homelessness in Montgomery. Task Force members and participants include representatives from several agencies and organizations providing either direct program services, supportive services, or advocacy on behalf of people experiencing homelessness. The Task Force will focus on actions that will make a significant, enduring impact on the issues faced by people experiencing homelessness, facing imminent homelessness, or otherwise enduring housing instability. The work of the Task Force will be shared by MACH as it progresses.
Carastar Health Opens Crisis Diversion Center
Carastar Health, formerly known as Montgomery Area Mental Health Authority, opened its mental health Crisis Center on May 16. This facility allows individuals located within Montgomery, Autauga, Elmore and Lowndes counties who are experiencing a behavioral health crisis to receive medically monitored short-term residential care. Located at 5915 Carmichael Road in Montgomery, the Center offers observation beds and a crisis stabilization unit. “The primary purpose of crisis intervention, “reports Carastar Health, “is to reduce the intensity of the immediate situation and help the individual overcome obstacles created by the traumatic episode. After the immediate crisis is diffused, individuals are instructed in problem solving and coping skills that may help to avert future crises. A crucial benefit of crisis counseling is the prevention of serious long-term problems associated with the traumatic event.” Carastar can respond to calls from individuals in the above counties with their Mobile Crisis Team. Calls for information and assistance are received at any time of day or night: 1-800-408-4197.

Internet Discounts for Households Receiving SSI
The Federal Communications Commission offers an Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) to reduce the cost of Internet access for eligible households. The ACP provides a discount of up to:
- $30 per month for qualifying households, and
- $75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands.
Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to $100 toward purchasing a laptop, desktop, or tablet from participating providers. Any household with an individual who receives Social Security Income (SSI) is eligible to receive the ACP discount. Receipt of this assistance will not affect a person’s SSI payment. For more information, visit https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/

Homeless Services in Public Schools
Homeless Education Regional Specialist, Nicey T. Eller, recently shared the work of the Homeless Education Division of the Alabama Department of Education at a MACH General Membership meeting. Ms. Eller and colleagues ensure that homeless children and youth enroll in school. They work with school administrators on ways to support the academic success of homeless children and youth. A former school principal, Ms. Eller provided a snapshot of efforts on behalf of homeless children and youth all over the state and explained how the Department of Education and local school systems are working to be additional hands and feet for financially stressed families. Information about services available to homeless or unstably housed families with school aged children is available in Ms. Eller’s presentation slides, which are posted on the MACH website on the Membership page: https://tinyurl.com/bdhpfhji. For specific questions, Ms. Eller can be contacted at 334-614-7168 or nicey.eller123@gmail.com.

You’re invited to the next MACH General Membership Meeting!
(Open to the public)
Thursday, June 23, 2022, 3 p.m.
Juliette Hampton Morgan Memorial Library
245 High Street, Montgomery, Global Classroom (2nd floor)
Join us at our next meeting – In person! We meet bimonthly to exchange current information, discuss relevant topics, and implement practical solutions to issues surrounding homelessness in Montgomery, Autauga, Bullock, Elmore and Lowndes counties. Consider attending regularly to learn from and add to the discussion. Subscribe to our email or become a MACH member at www.midalhomeless.org. To join the meeting virtually, email Eileen@midalhomeless.org for login information.
MACH Virtual Resource Hour on Mental Health

The opportunity to listen, learn and ask questions about local resources related to housing and housing stability has become a regular feature of programming at MACH. Called Resource Hour, these virtual, “mini-symposiums” center on themes related to homelessness and supportive services. In May, the discussion topic was mental health, with presentations from Donna Leslie, Executive Director of Carastar Health (formerly Montgomery Area Mental Health Authority), Corporal Patrick Luckie of the Montgomery Police Department’s Community Crisis Intervention Team, and Lee McMichael, adjunct professor of psychology and social work at Auburn University at Montgomery. Subscribe to MACH’s mailing list in order to be informed of future Resource Hour offerings. To be a part of the committee that plans and facilitates the Resource Hour (or if you have ideas for topics), email MACH’s Management Assistant: eileen@midalhomeless.org. The next virtual Resource Hour will be July 20th at 3 p.m.

Emergency Assistance with Water and Energy Bills

The Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP), funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Community Services (HHS-OCS), provides emergency assistance to low-income households for drinking water and wastewater services. Program priorities are to restore household water services, reduce arrearages, and reduce rate charges. Household incomes of less than 150 percent of the federally established poverty level are eligible for assistance. Similar to LIHEAP – Low-Income Household Energy Assistance Program - this assistance is administered by community action agencies throughout the state. On behalf of eligible households, the community action agencies below can mail payments directly to accounts related to water and/or wastewater systems.

For households in Autauga and Elmore counties:
Community Action Partnership of Middle Alabama
116 Chilton Place
Clanton, AL 35045-8706
Call center: 205-287-0139
Website and online appointment scheduler: http://www.capmal.org/

For households in Bullock and Lowndes counties:
Organized Community Action Program
507 North Three Notch Street
Troy, AL 36081-2120
Main office: 334-566-1712
Website: http://ocaptroy.com/

For households in Montgomery county:
Montgomery Community Action Committee & CDC
1066 Adams Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104-4424
Call center: 334-230-5259
Main office: 334-263-3474
Website: https://mcacinc.org/

Connecting People to Resources and Services: Dial 2-1-1

How can people in need have access to adequate shelter and housing assistance, along with referrals to other services? It takes collaboration and coordination among institutions and communities that provide services. For the past few years, HUD-funded housing programs have been required to participate in a local Coordinated Entry System to assess needs and connect people to resources available to meet those needs. Dialing 2-1-1 allows for an initial screening of needs and referral to housing services, along with all types of other community resources. Our local 2-1-1 information and referral network and Coordinated Entry System is operated by HandsOn River Region. If you or someone you know needs help, always start your search for answers by dialing 2-1-1.
Feed the Meter is a joint project of MACH and the City of Montgomery to develop resources to help end homelessness. Donations through green parking meters downtown support local community service programs that help those in need obtain and maintain housing and become self-supporting members of our community. By purchasing a one-year meter sponsorship of $2,000, you will receive:

- Placard bearing your name / organization’s name on the meter
- Your name or logo on the website, feedthemetermgm.org and on the MACH website
- Acknowledgment in all Feed the Meter publicity
- An essential place in addressing a significant issue that calls for community-wide support

Get information or become a sponsor at feedthemetermgm.org, or mail your payment to 101 Coliseum Boulevard, Montgomery, 36109. Questions? Contact MACH: 334-261-6182 or Lydia@midalhomeless.org.

Calling Businesses, Organizations and Individuals to Support Our Work: Become a Feed-the-Meter Sponsor!

River Region Connects, MACH’s annual resource fair for people experiencing homelessness or housing instability will be held in Montgomery on August 4 at the Multiplex at Cramton Bowl (220 Hall Street). If your organization provides housing, health, job readiness, behavioral health, family support, substance abuse/prevention, mental health, legal, or other social services, there is lots of space available, and WE NEED YOU THERE! Email eileen@midalhomeless.org or call 334-261-6182 to sign up (no charge). And by the way, we really need barbers, so consider asking your stylist if he or she will volunteer for 1, 2 or 3 hours on that day. Provide us their contact information, and we will touch base with them to answer their questions. Participants committed to attend thus far are listed below. Contact MACH today to be added to the list.

- ADPH Oral Health Education, Cancer Prevention and HIV Prevention
- Alabama Law Enforcement Licensing Division
- Council on Substance Abuse-NCADD
- HandsOn River Region and 2-1-1 Connects
- Hope Inspired Ministries Job Training Program
- Legal Services Alabama
- The Lions Club Eye Care Program
- Medical Advocacy and Outreach, Inc.
- MGM Unite Voter Registration
- Montgomery Pride United
- Viva Health
- The Wellness Coalition