



Vermont Housing Finance Agency

news release

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MORNINGSIDE SHELTER RECEIVES “CHANGE THE WORLD” GIFT

BURLINGTON—**Robin Howe** knows how to stretch a dollar. Howe, Vermont Housing Finance Agency’s Multifamily Operations Specialist, worked to turn a one dollar public relations campaign into a \$2,590 gift to a homeless shelter in Brattleboro, Vermont.

Ms. Howe worked during the month of February to raise funds for the Morningside Shelter after she learned about a project called Change the World, in which “change the world” was written on 100 one dollar bills and handed to 100 people. The only instruction was to think about ways to change the world. Howe explained that “the project really got me thinking about what I could do to make a difference... it was a no-brainer when I saw the temperatures plummeting and thought about homeless shelters reaching their capacity.”

She reached out to colleagues, family and friends and quickly raised the sizeable donation. “I am extremely grateful to everyone who contributed,” Howe remarked, “and particularly astounded at the generosity of the employees at Commonwealth Dairy” whose donations were then matched by the Brattleboro-based yogurt company itself.

Morningside Shelter operates at full capacity year-round, which includes 29 beds and two full-time programs for community members considered homeless but not staying at the shelter. Additionally, two apartments at the shelter are designed for permanent housing for formerly homeless individuals.

The shelter works collaboratively with area non-profit and public agencies to help people connect to a wide range of services including: job training and placement, medical and mental health treatment, family and substance abuse counseling, budget management, nutrition, health education, parenting and child care services, and assistance in identifying and qualifying for affordable housing opportunities.

Joshua Davis, Morningside’s Executive Director, explained that “Robin’s idea – to amplify the impact a dollar bill could make– quickly raised impressive contributions for shelter... especially in our current economic climate, we are extremely thankful for the generosity of those who donate to support our mission and work.”

VHFA is a non-profit agency created in 1974 by the Vermont Legislature to finance and promote affordable housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income Vermonters. Since its inception, the Agency has helped approximately 27,000 Vermont households with affordable mortgages and financed the development of approximately 8,400 affordable rental units.