

# THE ADVOCATE

## CROSSROADS

urban center

SPRING 2004

### AHAC Fights to Restore Vision and Dental Services for Medicaid Recipients

In 2003, the Anti-Hunger Action Committee (AHAC) attended the Utah legislative session beginning on Martin Luther King Day and ending March 4<sup>th</sup>. The main goal was to restore funding for vision and dental services in the Medicaid program. Dental was cut from the Medicaid budget in June of 2002 and vision was cut in December of the same year. It has been estimated that it would require \$3.7 million to fully restore dental and another \$1.1 million for vision.

The plan was to get the Speaker of the House, Marty Stephens, to take a stand publicly as to whether or not he supported the restoration of these budgets. The group went up to the Capitol every Tuesday of the 45 day session to try to persuade Stephens. In the first week, a letter was presented with suggestions on what should be done for vision and dental. The next four weeks, cakes with different statements were presented to Stephens. When this did not work, AHAC and the Disabled Rights Action Committee (DRAC) held a rally with signs and "Marty masks" (masks illustrated with Marty Stephens' face). The last thing done was the creation of "Martyville." Martyville was an imaginary town where people moved after they lost their glasses and their teeth. The population of this town was 61,411 people (the number of adults on Medicaid) and the town consisted of a dentist, an eye doctor, a grocer, a jailhouse, an office of economic development, and Marty's mansion.

In the end, the Speaker of the House did not publicly take a stance one way or the other. In an overall state budget of \$8 billion, only \$1 million was restored into the dental budget and none was restored for vision. This will help approximately one in every four Medicaid recipients needing dental assistance.

Although achieving only a partial victory, AHAC helped spread awareness about the importance of these Medicaid issues. AHAC members vow to return to the Capitol next year and for as long as it takes to accomplish full restoration of vision and dental services for Medicaid recipients in Utah. Crossroads is proud to sponsor their work.



Members of AHAC and DRAC create "Martyville" at the Utah State Capitol to demonstrate the need for full restoration of dental and vision services in Utah's Medicaid program.

### CORC Seeks Fair Treatment for Utahns Living in Poverty

Political posturing overshadowed the 2004 Utah legislative session, affecting the outcome of many issues directly impacting Utahns living in poverty. The Coalition of Religious Communities (CORC), sponsored by Crossroads Urban Center, and other advocates for the poor invested countless hours researching, writing bills, and meeting with legislators in attempts to enlighten them on the specific needs of low income people living in their communities. The high point of this legislative session was the direct participation by CORC members. Members were at the Capitol almost every day, and CORC Days on the Hill set records for attendance. On the down side, there were very few victories for low income people this session.

CORC continued to help lay the groundwork for the establishment of a state Earned Income Tax Credit for low income working families, although legislation to create such a program once again failed. CORC members also consistently highlighted the need to adjust income tax brackets and index them for inflation. While both the Olene Walker Housing Loan Fund and the Pamela Atkinson Homeless Trust Fund received \$200,000 in additional one time money, CORC is still pushing for a permanent revenue stream to fund the creation and preservation of affordable housing in Utah.

Next year CORC will again pursue legislation to require corporations and industries in Utah benefiting from sales tax exemptions to demonstrate a public benefit or necessity for these ongoing tax breaks. A bill repealing many of these exemptions was killed during the session. Despite strong advocacy by CORC, the Payday Loan Industry remains poorly regulated in Utah, with no



The CORC Annual Meeting to set priorities for 2004-05 was held on April 17th at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in West Valley City.

CORC Continued from page 1

cap on the amount of interest that can be charged on loans made against postdated checks.

Enough “one time” money was found to continue Utah’s General Assistance program for people who are too disabled to work and awaiting approval of federal disability benefits, but funding for this program remains precarious. One million dollars was allocated to partially restore adult dental service for people on Medicaid. Unfortunately, this is only about a quarter of what it would cost to fully restore the program. Nothing at all was allocated for vision services.

The determined and dedicated members of CORC are already planning for the 2005 Legislature.

To help, contact Linda Hilton at Crossroads, 364-7765.



Dary Duran, a food pantry volunteer, takes a break from stocking Utah’s busiest food pantry.

*Splinters from the Chair*

**The New Board:** The Board of Directors for this year has a membership of TWENTY-SIX! New members are Stephanie Wilson and Angelisa Smith. There are now thirteen members from the “Community Served” and thirteen members from the “Support Community.” We are all very grateful to the people who continue to volunteer their time and effort to work on our Board.

**The New Logo:** Check out our new LOGO! I want to personally thank Crowell Advertising, Marketing & P.R. for creating it. The agency donated time to devise six original designs – so that we could choose one. My thanks also go to Bob Edgar for spearheading the effort.

**The Thrift Store:** We have the final plans for the Thrift Store remodel. First we will add a section to square off the back of the building. This will give us a garage for the van, more storage, and a bigger sorting area. The driveway will be moved slightly to allow for the expansion. We hope to start this project by August 2004. The inside remodeling will be done in steps. We are now looking into the possibility of using work teams and volunteers to help us. And the number of people we serve keeps increasing! In March 2004 we served 50% MORE clients than we did in March 2003!

**Loooooooooooooooooooooong Range Plan:** It’s time to do a long range plan for 2005 – 2009. We need to continually evaluate our organization. I think the following questions are important:

- Does our mission statement still reflect the work we do in the community?
- What are our strengths and weaknesses?
- Have we asked our clients how we could better meet their needs?
- Are there other advocacy projects in which Crossroads might be effective?

It is important to have every Board Committee determine the specific projects and goals for the next five years based on information gathered through a long range planning process. We will be looking for input from staff, volunteers, clients, and congregations to help us generate a thoughtful five-year plan. The Board Retreat in May will focus on ways to accomplish our goals. By September we expect to have the first draft for review. My goal is to have the plan completed and ready for publication by the end of the year.

**The Caring Connection:** Mary Ann Allison, Diane Stockebrand, Glenn Bailey and I attended *The Caring Connection* conference sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church.

This Quadrennial Conference was held in Tampa, Florida in November 2003. It was attended by 98 other mission institutions from various locations across the country. We discovered that Crossroads is very unique. Our organization does both direct service (Food Pantry and Thrift Store) and advocacy work. Most other institutions do just one or the other. We toured numerous mission sites in Tampa and attended workshops and presentations. One of my favorite tours was of a large food co-op. This very successful operation gave us ideas that we might be able to use as we consider starting a co-op here in Salt Lake City.

**KUDOS:** Crossroads Urban Center was voted the BEST political activist group by *Salt Lake City Weekly*. “When the cold cruel world fails the least among us, it’s Crossroads’ mission to pick up the pieces.” Cheers to all our staff and volunteers.

Debbie Duncan  
Board Chairwoman

**THE ADVOCATE**

**Our Mission**

Crossroads Urban Center is a nonprofit, grassroots organization which assists and organizes low income, disabled, and minority Utahns to meet basic survival needs and to address problems affecting quality of life.

**Affiliations**

Our work is privately supported by individuals, businesses, religious congregations, and foundations. Crossroads is also supported by many congregations through the annual Crossroads Bazaar. Established in 1966, Crossroads is a multifaith project related to the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, USA, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the United Church of Christ.

**Credits**

Chairwoman:	Debbie Duncan
Executive Director:	Glenn Bailey
Newsletter Layout & Design:	Jim Hokom

## The Food Pantry at Crossroads Urban Center: It's Not All About Food

The Luisa E. Lema Emergency Food Pantry at Crossroads Urban Center is the busiest in Utah. Over the past three months we served an average of 158 people in 69 households per day. We also wage the fight against hunger in Utah with more than just food. Many of the services we provide are less well known.

We have baby formula, food and diapers for infants. We provide bus tokens and gasoline vouchers for those who are in need of transportation. In addition, we give out prescription vouchers for up to \$40 of medicine, and vouchers for household and clothing items that can be redeemed at the Crossroads Thrift Store.



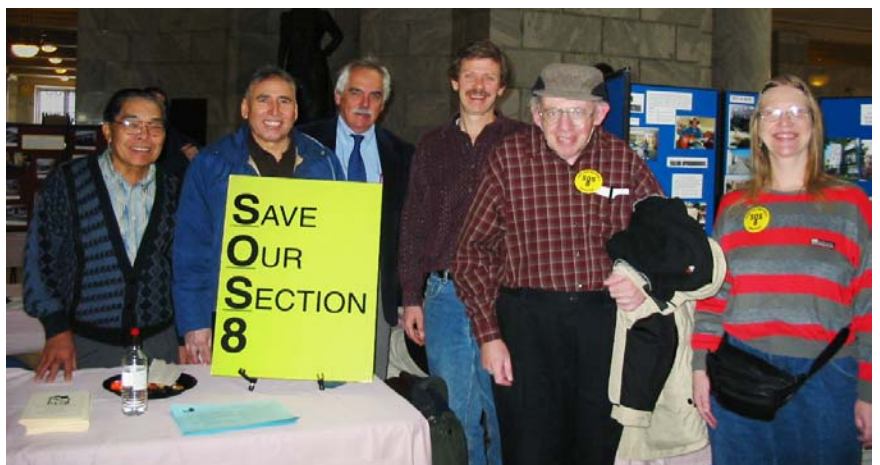
We also have an emergency fund which distributes \$1,000 each month for households who are behind on rent and facing eviction or being threatened with a utility cut off.

Other than the variety of services we provide, the things that set Crossroads' Emergency Food Pantry apart are our dedicated staff and volunteers. In interviews with users of pantry services recently conducted by students from the University of Utah, an overwhelming majority agreed on one thing — Crossroads has a very friendly staff. As one person put it, "They are very good people. Even if you come in and you forgot your papers, they just want to help."

Pantry Director Rachel Fischbein working with someone needing help from Crossroads.

## Utah HUD Tenants Association: Tenants Helping Tenants

The Utah HUD Tenants Association, or UHTA, is a subsidiary of Crossroads Urban Center that deals with housing issues. UHTA organizes and empowers tenants in order to preserve and improve living conditions. The organization consists of tenants (mainly senior citizens and people with disabilities) who take action on housing issues that are important for the tenants themselves. Such issues include affordable rent, building safety, housing management and security. Over the past five years, UHTA has helped preserve approximately 17 housing projects with over 1,200 housing units.



Members of UHTA at the State Capitol in January. From Left to Right: Rudy Roca, Jesus Campos, Tim Funk, (Project Director), Bill Germundson (Project Staff), Doug Cotant and Darla Ball.

Even though UHTA has helped many tenants keep their homes, there are many more housing projects at risk. It has been estimated that in Utah 93 housing projects under federally subsidized Section 8 and Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) are at risk of contract expiration by 2006. These 93 projects include 4,451 housing units. Contract expiration could result in increased rents exceeding the means of current tenants.

There are many ways to help preserve these housing projects. One way is to adopt a "no net loss" policy. This policy states that at least the current number of units must be maintained through preservation or replacement. UHTA has been working with Salt Lake City to create a workable no net loss policy.

UHTA's work has been given a tremendous boost over the past couple of years by support from the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, and the Utah Community Development Corporation. To find out how you can help with UHTA's effort, call Bill Germundson or Tim Funk at Crossroads, 364-7765.

Just a reminder

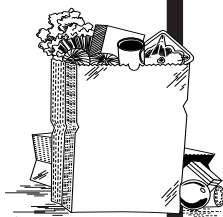
### The Annual Letter Carriers' Food Drive Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>

Items that the food pantry needs most at this time include: *lots* of canned soup, canned tomato products, canned beans, Ramen noodles, small cans of baby formula and mac & cheese.

Of course all nonperishable foods are appreciated.

Please donate generously

Again this year **ALL** food donated in zip codes 84101, 84102, 84103, 84111, 84110, 84145 & 84151 will go **DIRECTLY** to Crossroads' Emergency Food Pantry. Donations in other zip codes will go to the *Utah Food Bank* - -- which also supports Crossroads.



VISIT Crossroads Urban Center  
on the Internet @

**www.crossroads-u-c.org**



“OH, BY THE WAY...”

Our newsletter this spring was assembled with help from a writing class at the University of Utah. Special thanks to Kien La, Nhieu La, Britney Crofts, and Ricky Guido.

Don't forget when you're making charitable donations that **Crossroads can accept all major credit cards.** Talk to Jim for more information.

**Crossroads is on the web at [www.crossroads-u-c.org](http://www.crossroads-u-c.org).** You will find newsletters, program and financial information, history, and much more. Also, would you like to receive communications from Crossroads (such as this Newsletter) electronically? If so, we need your email address. Contact [jim@crossroads-u-c.org](mailto:jim@crossroads-u-c.org)

As you may know, **Crossroads Urban Center has an endowment fund.** Any gifts of stocks or marketable securities, as well as designated gifts, are automatically put in this fund to insure the long term future of the agency. Please remember Crossroads when doing estate planning or other planned giving. For more information, call Glenn.

We reluctantly say **farewell to Pantry staffer Sue Stephens** this spring, and **welcome our new Pantry Aide, Jennifer Orms.** Thanks, Sue! It was our good fortune to have you at Crossroads.



Sue Stephens & Jennifer Orms, past & present Pantry Aides.

**NEEDS LIST**

The following is a list of things we need most at Crossroads Urban Center. Donations of food, clothing and household goods, time, and money are needed on an ongoing basis.

**Pantry**

- Dry snacks
- Canned milk
- Dry beans
- Canned soup
- Canned tomato products
- Peanut butter (small jars)
- Canned meats (small cans)
- Pork & beans
- Canned beans
- Drinks (small)
- Boxed meals

*347 South 400 East  
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Mon. - Fri.  
(801) 364-7765*

**Thrift Store**

- Towels
- Kids' Clothes
- Pots/Pans/Ovenware
- Blankets/Bedding
- Sheets/Pillows
- Plates/Bowls/Silverware
- Men's Clothes
- Women's Clothes (size 12 and larger)

*1385 W. Indiana Avenue (850 South)  
10:00 AM to 6:30 PM  
Tues. - Fri.  
10:00 AM to 5:00 PM  
Saturday  
(801) 359-8837*

*The Thrift Store always needs items in the following categories to sell in order to help raise revenue and continue providing service:  
Working TV's, radios, microwaves, telephones or electronics of any kind.  
Any Collectibles: china, dolls, glassware (including milkglass), silverplate, etc.  
Books & small appliances or anything else that can be sold to help raise money!*

Individuals and groups are always needed for one-time and ongoing projects at the Thrift Store and Food Pantry. Please call Linda at Crossroads Urban Center to get involved.  
(801) 364-7765

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