Year-Round Shelter and Services Center to Open Doors in 2015

In 2015, after two decades of advocacy, and the efforts of countless supporters, the Homeless Services Center (HSC) will open in Arlington’s Courthouse Area.

“A-SPAN could not have done this without the support from our many volunteers, members of the faith community, partners in schools and businesses, our staff and board, and the Arlington County Board,” says Kathleen Sibert, A-SPAN’s Executive Director. “A year-round shelter has been a vision for so many, and thanks to their efforts, the HSC will be a reality early next year.”

Arlington County purchased the Thomas Building located at 2020 N. 14th St in November 2012. On February 25, 2014, the County Board awarded the construction contract for the HSC to Miller Brothers. Construction began in April with a goal to complete renovations in December 2014.

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The existing Emergency Winter Shelter (EWS) will open for clients on November 1, 2014. A-SPAN’s goal is to relocate our Shirlington offices and our Opportunity Place Day Program to the HSC during February 2015. “A-SPAN then plans on transitioning operations from the current shelter to the HSC in March,” Sibert says.

The Homeless Services Center will house a 50 bed shelter program, a day program and a medical respite program. Renovations include a commercial kitchen, dining area and classroom.

For the latest updates, please visit: www.a-span.org/what-we-do/shelter/homeless-services-center

A-SPAN is Ending Homelessness in Arlington...and Expanding Our Services!
A-SPAN held its initial Coming Home Breakfast Thursday, April 24, 2014 at the NRECA Building in Ballston.

Over 300 people joined A-SPAN for an hour over breakfast to learn about the organization’s recent successes and plans for the future.

Outgoing Board Chair Tim Ward began the program and spoke about how his 10 years with the organization has expanded his views on homelessness. “Every person on the streets, every one of them, they all have their own unique story,” said Ward.

Keynote speaker John Shooshan said of homeless persons, “These are our brothers, these are our sisters. We can’t turn our backs on them.” Shooshan has long been involved with efforts to reduce homelessness in Arlington and he implored others to get involved, “Whoever we are, we can all do something to make a difference.”

Finally, Mallyveen Teah, a long-time A-SPAN client, shared how the death of his mother and a coup in his home country of Liberia led him to drop out of college. “It started a downward cycle.” Over the next 30 years, he battled alcoholism and homelessness. A-SPAN case managers helped Teah get his life back together, culminating with a move into his own apartment this April.

A-SPAN Wins Leadership Award

On May 21st, A-SPAN was presented with the Nonprofit Award at the Leadership Arlington “Leadership Legacy” Awards. Recipients are selected for their demonstration of leadership in (the Arlington) community and support of Leadership Arlington’s mission “to enlighten, inspire and connect leaders.” Also awarded: Ethics Award to Randy Anderson of United Bank and Community Impact Award to Rich Doud of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce.

The Breakfast, now A-SPAN’s annual event, raised $85,000 in donations, sponsorships, and future pledges. This benefits the over 1,000 homeless persons that A-SPAN serves annually.
A-SPAN Offers

Our Thanks and Best of Luck

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the departure of A-SPAN staff members - Olivia Payton and Kleidy Montigny.

As one of A-SPAN’s longtime employees, Olivia Payton has served as Shelter Director, Volunteer Coordinator, and Outreach worker during her nearly 13 years with the organization. Permanent Supportive Housing Case Manager Kleidy Montigny moves on after working three years with A-SPAN. Kleidy was part of an organization-wide effort to house homeless people – as over 40 people got the keys to their new apartment last year alone!

We will miss them but appreciate their hard work and dedication to our clients and mission.

CareFirst, Rosslyn BID Fund Med Program

Medical Coordinator Brittani Valderama oversaw the expansion of care at the current shelter and preparation for medical respite -

- at the upcoming year-round services center. This past season, A-SPAN extended coverage at the Emergency Winter Shelter to five evenings per week, increasing client visits by 12%. Free medical care was offered Sunday-Thursday from 5:30-8 PM. Four nurse practitioners and a pro-bono doctor provided medical screenings, preventative services, followup care and prescriptions for uninsured street homeless individuals. A-SPAN’s medical care has saved Virginia Hospital Center over a million dollars the last four years.

For the first time, Arlington Free Clinic staff came to share information about their Breast Health Outreach, gave tips on breast health, registered women for a March clinic and provided each with a mammogram referral to Virginia Hospital Center. Arlington County Public Health provided free flu vaccinations to 30 clients. Through joint partnerships with Georgetown and Marymount Universities, nursing students provided basic health screenings at A-SPAN’s day program, linked clients to local healthcare resources and distributed medical kits in the community. Fall 2013 marked the first time Georgetown medical students paired with public health nursing students at Opportunity Place.

The opening of the Homeless Services Center will expand client's access to healthcare year-round. The Homeless Services Center will include five private rooms devoted to medical respite and will provide a safe place for homeless individuals with an acute medical condition to recuperate.
It is a common refrain for people when first facing homelessness. That thought is what occurred to Mr. Hill six years ago when he first faced this harsh reality. The last thing Hill, who is a veteran, expected was to find himself living on the streets. He did everything in his power to avoid it.

In 1983, Mr. Hill was discharged from the Army after serving four years. He served an additional year in the DC National Guard and then began doing odd jobs to make a living. He drove trucks and a limo. He later worked a couple years with Catholic Charities when they opened a shelter on New York Avenue. “That’s how I knew about homelessness.”

But when Mr. Hill lost his job, he could no longer afford his rent. Without income, he lost his housing and slept on friends’ sofas to avoid living on the streets. That gradually led to Mr. Hill sleeping at shelters, on benches at Metro stops and even spending some nights at the airport to avoid the bad weather outside.

In 2013, while working with a Veterans Affairs outreach center, he was directed to A-SPAN as a candidate for a Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) voucher. With the help of his case manager, he applied for and received a voucher. And on Monday, March 31st, he signed a lease and received the keys to his apartment. Since then, he has completed a training course in Building Maintenance and plans to attend night school for HVAC.

Mr. Hill was the lead speaker for the 100,000 Homes Media Event held on Capitol Hill on Wednesday, June 11th. At the event, Community Solutions announced that the campaign has housed 101,628 chronically homeless individuals including over 30,000 veterans.

“I didn’t think it would happen to me,” said Mr. Alvin Hill.

A-SPAN Housing Veterans

A-SPAN has housed 15 veterans through its partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs.
John served in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War.

After being honorably discharged in 1975, John – like many Vietnam veterans – struggled with mental illness and sought treatment for his condition in Bethesda. After being released, he managed to secure housing but continued to struggle with his mental illness. Issues with his veteran benefits led to him losing housing, and over the next 10 years, he went from shelter to shelter in the DC Metro area in order to stay safe and warm at night. When a hunting knife was found in his possession, John was incarcerated.

After his release, John stayed at A-SPAN’s Winter Shelter. It was at the shelter that John first met Case Manager Sam Gatewood. After learning of John’s struggles with mental illness, Sam referred him to A-SPAN’s permanent supportive housing, believing that John was a good fit for the program.

Permanent Supportive Housing Case Manager Ayana Bellamy helped John obtain his veteran benefits. After two months of working with him, she was able to secure housing for John in Arlington. He has remained in his apartment the past three years and is “most proud that I have been able to improve my credit.” With better credit, counseling and the stability that permanent supportive housing provides, anything is possible for this veteran. “I am looking forward to achieving the American Dream by becoming a homeowner.”

Besides keeping up on current events, John spends his days working out, taking walks, meditating and watching comedians. An apartment of his own allows him to do the things he enjoys. “I was extremely touched by the furniture that was donated to me by A-SPAN in order to make my apartment a home.” A-SPAN’s Make It A Home fund provides a mattress, box spring, frame and other essentials for clients moving into housing.

To learn more about the Make It A Home Fund, visit: www.a-span.org/get-involved/donation-opportunities/make-it-a-home-fund
Goodbye to Jan Sacharko

A-SPAN thanks former Director of Development Jan-Michael Sacharko for his five years of service and wishes him well in his new position. Jan helped advance our development activities as well as projects such as 100 Homes Arlington. He was a major part of community outreach including the walk program. Manager of Volunteer Programs and Special Events Amanda Mark will be the contact for upcoming walk events.

A-SPAN would like to thank the many schools, churches and businesses that supported our walk program last year.

After 26 years, Fannie Mae has ended its Help the Homeless Walkathon that has raised over $100 million for beneficiaries. A-SPAN will launch its new program to end veteran homelessness this summer 2014.

Want to host a community event to help end veteran homelessness? We will help you create a walk, movie night, soccer game or other event. Contact Amanda Mark at amark@a-span.org or (703) 842-0168.

Thanks to our 2013 sponsors: Arlington Temple United Methodist Church, Boeing, Brookfield, CEB, Crystal City BID, JBG, John Marshall Bank, Koons Toyota Arlington, Monday Properties, Rosslyn BID, Segue Technologies, Shooshan Company and Vornado.

Thanks to 2013 walk hosts:

- Arlington Church of Christ
- Arlington Presbyterian
- Ashlawn Elementary
- The Boeing Corporation
- Binary Group
- Central United Methodist
- Crystal City BID
- Donaldson Run
- Faith Lutheran Preschool
- Hoffman Boston Elementary
- Jamestown Elementary
- NOVA Catholic
- Our Lady Queen of Peace
- Our Savior Lutheran School
- Randolph Elementary
- Rock Spring Servathon
- Rosslyn BID
- St. George's Episcopal
- Tuckahoe Elementary
- Universalist Unitarian

Community walks raised over $225,000 for A-SPAN’s services and our mission to end homelessness.
A-SPAN has gathered some of our most active, enthusiastic and energetic volunteers to form a special volunteer committee: the A-SPAN A-TEAM.

The purpose of the A-TEAM is to assist A-SPAN staff at special events throughout the year. We meet once per month to discuss ideas and upcoming projects.

A-TEAM duties:
- Participating in the set-up and tear-down of events
- Managing booths
- Assisting in planning volunteer appreciation events
- Helping to spread the word about upcoming fundraisers

If you are interested in learning more about volunteering or becoming a member of the A-TEAM, please contact Amanda at amark@a-span.org.

AmeriCorps is a domestic Peace Corps program that began in the 1960s as part of President Johnson's War on Poverty. AmeriCorps members serve across the country and provide direct services to those in need or help build capacity for nonprofits.

VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) provides full time "members," recruited by nonprofits, to create and expand programs and help bring citizens out of poverty. “What made A-SPAN a perfect fit for the AmeriCorps VISTA program is the work we do to end homelessness here in Arlington,” says David Simon, Director of Marketing and Grants, “and the progress we have made in helping veterans get housing.”

April joins A-SPAN from Miami, Florida, where she received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Miami. Alex is from Wichita, Kansas, where he received his Bachelor’s in Business Administration from Wichita State University.

What will your legacy be?

A-SPAN has many planned giving options that allow you to make charitable gifts, meet your retirement needs and take advantage of tax incentives? To learn more, contact Executive Director Kathleen Sibert at 703-842-0150 or ksibert@a-span.org.

On March 1, A-SPAN welcomed two AmeriCorps VISTAs to its development department - a first for the organization.

April Gangemi and Alex Held will devote their year of service to help A-SPAN build capacity and gear up for the move to the Homeless Services Center. April works closely with Amanda Mark, Manager of Volunteers and Special Events, in developing and expanding volunteer programs. Alex assists with marketing and communications projects including A-SPAN's vehicle donation program and the development of A-SPAN's planned giving program.

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Donate Today to Help A-SPAN Replace Aging Van

Battelle Memorial Institute helped kick off the drive to replace A-SPAN’s old 2002 van by making a $10,000 donation towards a new one. Vans allow street outreach staff to meet with clients where they live on the streets. Vans provide clients transportation to shelters. They help case managers visit clients in homes, or take them to see a doctor. A-SPAN needs to raise an additional $25,000 for a new van. Please Donate by using the enclosed envelope or go to www.a-span.org and click Donate.