

Executive Summary:

The Randy Sams' Outreach Shelter (RSOS) respectfully requests funding in support of its Residential Services program in the amount of \$5,000. The RSOS is the only free 93-bed shelter for adult men and women in an 85-mile radius. Thus far in 2016, more than 125 people have moved from the Shelter into their own housing and we have provided nearly 15,000 nights of shelter to some of those in our community most in need.

The Randy Sams' Outreach Shelter, Inc., a 501 c(3) organization, was developed as a product of a labor of love. Randy Sams was a local teenager who volunteered at the local Outreach Kitchen. In May 1993, Randy was tragically killed. In honor of their son, Randy's parents donated land and seed money to establish a shelter that would serve the Greater Texarkana community, hungry, poor, and homeless. The RSOS opened on January 6, 1996, and now averages between 80 and 85 guests per night. To date, the RSOS has transitioned over 1,200 clients to permanent housing from the RSOS and over 13,000 community clients have received utility assistance, rental assistance and food baskets. The RSOS is the only emergency shelter in Bowie County and is the only free 93-bed facility for adult men and women in an 85-mile radius. The RSOS offers all services free of charge to those in need. We offer a 90-day program for anyone experiencing homelessness. This year we celebrate 20 years of providing shelter services in the Texarkana region.

We propose to serve those in our community who are homeless or at risk of homelessness by providing shelter, food, clothing, transportation assistance, prescription assistance and case management at the Shelter along with support services through referrals to other community resources. In the first nine months of 2016, we have provided almost 15,000 nights of shelter to 350 people, with 125 people moving from the Shelter to permanent housing of their own. This year we have provided more than 23,000 services not including meals to some of those in our community most in need. The demand for our services has risen so substantially over the years that this year, in our 20th year of providing services, we are expanding our facility to double the number of women we can serve. The funds from this grant would help us purchase supplies needed by the shelter including food, cleaning supplies and paper goods as well as help pay for necessary services like pest control services and grease trap cleanings. Additionally, we would utilize this funding to help purchase identity documents for those who enter the shelter without a state issued ID or a birth certificate.

Our expected outcomes include people continuing to move from emergency shelter into permanent housing. It is the goal of the RSOS to see at least 50% of those who come through our program move into permanent housing at the end of their stay.

I can be contacted at 903-792-7024 (office) or 903-280-2289 (cell) or via email at jenniferlaurent@cableone.net. Our address is 402 Oak Street Texarkana, TX 75501.

We thank you for considering our request for \$5,000 in funding in support of our Residential Services program.

Section I: Contact Information

A: Jennifer Laurent

402 Oak Street

Texarkana, TX 75501

903-792-7024

jenniferlaurent@cableone.net

B: Randy Sams' Outreach Shelter

402 Oak Street

Texarkana, TX 75501

C: Tax ID number- 75-2627181

Section II: Organizational Description

The Randy Sams' Outreach Shelter, Inc., a 501 c(3) organization, was developed as a product of a labor of love. Randy Sams was a local teenager who volunteered at the local Outreach Kitchen. In May 1993, Randy was tragically killed. In honor of their son, Randy's parents donated land and seed money to establish a shelter that would serve the Greater Texarkana community, hungry, poor, and homeless. The RSOS opened on January 6, 1996, and now averages between 80 and 85 guests per night. To date, the RSOS has transitioned over 1,200 clients to permanent housing from the RSOS and over 13,000 community clients have received utility assistance, rental assistance and food baskets. The RSOS is the only emergency shelter in Bowie County and is the only free 93-bed facility for adult men and women in an 85-mile radius. The RSOS offers all services free of charge to those in need. Thus far in 2016, 125 people have moved from the Shelter into permanent housing and we have provided almost 15,000 nights of shelter, 23,000 services not including meals to hundreds of people seeking assistance. This year we celebrate 20 years of providing services in our community and have started renovations to double our capacity to serve women and provide a bigger shelter for all seeking help.

The primary mission of the Randy Sams' Outreach Shelter (RSOS) is to provide a safe haven for homeless men and women. Since providing a retreat however, is only the first step in combating homelessness, the derived mission of the RSOS is to prevent chronic homelessness by removing barriers to mental and physical health, as well as essential social services, and take necessary steps towards resolving root problems in collaboration with over 50 community, faith-based organizations, and government agencies to assist in providing self-sufficiency.

Section III: Program Description

A: The Randy Sams' Outreach Shelter respectfully requests funding in the amount of \$5000.00 from Texas Rural Communities, Inc. in support of our Residential Services Program. If awarded the funds will be used to pay for supplies needed by the Shelter, including food and paper goods, cleaning supplies, identification documents including birth certificates and state issued ID as well as services including pest control and grease trap cleaning.

Our services are vital to so many in our community. The Randy Sams' Outreach Shelter serves all those who are most desperate in our area. In 2016 alone we have moved 125 clients out of homelessness into their own housing as well as several into rehab facilities or transitional housing programs. 20% of clients served by the RSOS are veterans of the Armed Forces. 19% report being abused. 75% struggle with some level of mental/and or physical illness.

Each year the RSOS participates in the annual state wide point in time count to identify and count those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness so that we may best serve the people of our community. On a single night in January in Texarkana, TX 141 people were identified as homeless and those are only the people willing to be surveyed. Studies indicate that for every one person surveyed there are 10 more who are not.

B: The RSOS currently serves the Greater Texarkana Metropolitan Statistical Area with emergency shelter and support services. Through our residential services program we provide shelter, food, clothing, hygiene items, transportation assistance, prescription assistance and case management with the goal of seeing people move from the Shelter into self-sustained community living. It is our goal to see a minimum of 50% of those who seek our services achieve permanent housing. These programs/services will be evaluated based on the number of individuals or households that are able to receive residential assistance and food assistance, with an accessibility rate of 100% being the goal. This number will be evaluated by the Executive Director and bi-monthly reports will be given to the Board of Directors.

Individuals and families in the Greater Texarkana Area have experienced homelessness due to eroding work opportunities, a decline in public assistance, lack of affordable health care, domestic violence, mental illness, and addiction disorders. The RSOS services all residents at its current facility free of charge. Clients include those who are transient and/or community individuals referred from other social service organizations. A Case Manager is on-site to perform various referral services, intake and assessment, as well as provide support for the transition into permanent housing. In addition to the opportunity to have their basic needs met, clients of the Randy Sams' Outreach Shelter are also eligible to go through on the job training at our Be the Blessing Bakery program, a full-service bakery that employs those who are homeless or formerly homeless. Residents are also eligible to apply for client to work positions within the shelter where they will obtain job skills in clerical work and cooking with the intent of building their skills to seek long term employment.

Residential Services include: 24hr/365 day emergency shelter with sleeping, eating, bath and recreational facilities; food at no cost (hot meals and brown bags); hygiene kits, clothing (including winter outerwear); mental and physical health appointments, prescription assistance; medical and dental referrals, transportation to services offered outside of the Shelter (including, but not limited to, taxi and bus fares); job training through the Be the Blessing Bakery program or our client to work program, subsidized and public housing referrals; first month rental assistance; appointments for government programs (including, but not limited to, Social Security Benefits, Food Stamp Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families); referrals to life and job skills as well as job placement providers; referrals for spiritual counseling/guidance as requested; alcohol and drug addiction support groups.

C: The targeted service populations include the homeless, families and individuals that are at-risk of homelessness, the hungry, the low-income, the mentally ill, those formerly incarcerated and the unemployed/underemployed. 100% of our clients are low to moderate income. Our program serves approximately 600 people each year through our Residential Services program.

D: We are the only completely free of cost shelter of our size for adult men and women in an 85-mile radius and we are the only emergency shelter in our county. We do not drug test or require ID to receive assistance. We offer an on the job training option through both client to work programming as well as Be the Blessing Bakery. Our on the job training program is a model for other communities as is our low barrier approach to providing shelter. Additionally, we were a pilot program for coordinated access in our city through the Texas Homeless Network. We communicate our successes (and failures) to Texas Homeless Network who can disseminate the information to other agencies throughout the state.

E: If awarded, the \$5,000.00 from Texas Rural Communities, Inc would be used in the following ways:

Food: \$625

Non Food: \$1,000

Cleaning Supplies: \$1,000

ID Documents: \$500

Pest Control: \$1200

Grease Trap Cleaning: \$675

If TRC is unable to fund our entire request we would happily accept a smaller allocation of funding.

F: Our anticipated outcomes include increasing the number of people who move from emergency shelter into permanent housing and remain stably housed. Outcomes will be tracked using our HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) that we utilize with other service providers to help maintain shareable data. Our goal is to see a minimum of 50% of those who obtain shelter through our program move into permanent housing. We will track these measurable outcomes using exit worksheets and client follow up appointments. Data will be reviewed by the executive director and reported bi-monthly to the Board of Directors.

G: Our program is already in motion and thus we will be able to begin expending funds immediately upon receipt if awarded. We anticipate all funds to be expended within 6 months of receipt.

H: We have never received funds through TRC before.