

USICH September Council Meeting Panelist Biographies and Briefs

Michelle Flynn, The Road Home, Salt Lake City, Utah

Michelle Flynn serves as the Associate Executive Director of Programs at The Road Home, where she has worked for more than 16 years. The Road Home provides emergency shelter as well as transitional and permanent supportive housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Salt Lake County. Prior to her tenure at The Road Home, Michelle worked in advocacy and public relations in Washington, DC.

Michelle has a bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Drew University, Madison, New Jersey. She is currently enrolled in the Masters of Public Administration program at the University of Utah.

Michelle has served on a variety of homeless and fundraising boards and committees, including the Utah Chapter of NAHRO, Utah Society of Fundraisers, State of Utah Homeless Coordinating Committee, and the Salt Lake County Homeless Coordinating Council. She has received the Pathfinder Award from the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce and the Outstanding Development Officer Award from the Utah Society of Fundraisers.

USICH has invited The Road Home to present to the Council because it is an excellent example of a state TANF agency using the flexibility of TANF in order to invest in housing stability for families experiencing homelessness.

Over the past five years, The Road Home has seen a significant increase in the number of families coming for shelter each year. They have responded to this drastic increase with rapid re-housing, beginning in October 2009.

The Road Home is the central rapid re-housing agency for Salt Lake County, and it operates its largest family shelter. (In addition to The Road Home, there are two domestic violence shelters and a small (five-family) shelter for families in churches.)

The rapid re-housing model operates with a progressive engagement service delivery plan. They assist families in shelter to move as quickly as possible into housing with a limited amount of support. Through a regular reassessment process based on income levels, support is increased as needed.

The program has been financed with a combination of HUD’s one-time Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) funds and state Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds.

- Annual average investment from TANF of \$950,000
- Annual average investment from HPRP of \$1,046,032
- 74 percent of funding has been used for barrier debt elimination, deposits, and rental assistance
- 26 percent for case management, housing location assistance, and administrative costs.

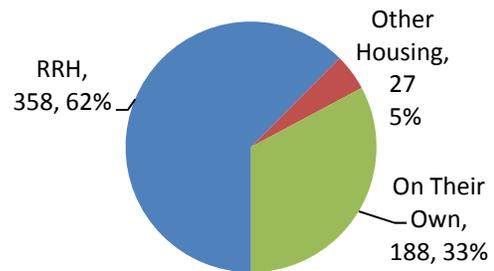
From October 1, 2009 to June 30, 2012, 1,044 families were served; 226 of those families were referred by partner agencies including domestic violence shelters and school districts.

All services are focused on removing housing barriers and increasing income. All families in emergency shelter have an opportunity to be assessed for housing after seven days. Through the partnership with the State Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and TANF, there is a strong employment component. Families must meet with a DWS employment counselor, who is located onsite at the shelter, before being approved for rapid re-housing. At this visit, a full employment assessment is performed as well as a review of mainstream benefits including SNAP food assistance, TANF cash assistance, and Medicaid.

- 70 percent of families stayed engaged with DWS after the initial visit and worked toward obtaining employment.
- 55 percent of families either maintained income (employment or mainstream benefits) or obtained stable employment during the first three months after placement into housing.

Case management continues with in-home visits for the duration of the family’s time in the program. Employment and increased income continue to be the biggest issue for families. In response, The Road Home and DWS continue to strengthen its collaboration on employment assistance for families.

Of the **659 families** served with shelter this last fiscal year, 572 families have moved out. Rapid re-housing assisted 62 percent of all families, five percent of families moved into supportive housing, and 33 percent of families moved out of shelter with no financial assistance.



The average cost of supporting a family through rapid re-housing is **\$4,866**, with an average length in the rapid re-housing program of five months. The average length of stay in shelter has been reduced from 71 days five years ago to 26 days.

Over 500 different private landlords have participated in the program.

Since the program began in October 2009, **87 percent** of families have remained housed. The Road Home continues to work with the 13 percent that return to homelessness and helps them get re-housed, often with more intensive programs.

With the close-out of HPRP, TANF funding is committed for next year. The Road Home has Emergency Solutions Grants, Salt Lake County HOME dollars, and VA Supportive Services for Veteran Families funding.