



**Bonner County**  
**Homeless Task Force**  
dba **Transitions in Progress Services**  
**(T.I.P.S.)**

**2009**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

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[www.transitionsinprogress.org](http://www.transitionsinprogress.org)



## **Transitions in Progress Services**

**A Shelter Program Serving Homeless Families and Victims of Domestic Violence in Bonner County**

### **Message from the Board of Directors:**

The Bonner County Homeless Task Force, dba Transitions in Progress Services (T.I.P.S.), is dedicated to the elimination of homelessness and domestic violence in northern Idaho. We provide temporary and transitional housing and supportive program services to the homeless and victims of domestic violence. We also promote advocacy initiatives that provide meaningful solutions to the causes of homelessness in an effort to prevent the onset of homelessness and assist individuals and families by providing pathways to self sufficiency.

The current economic environment has resulted in an increase in the number of individuals and families in need of our housing and services. In addition, the competition for funding, either through traditional grant sources or through community-based fund raising, demands that we adapt by being more creative and diligent in our efforts.

We are responding by focusing on corporate, foundation and community-based sourcing and increasing the range of services we manage in an effort to provide a full continuum of services for our residents.

We are grateful for our friends and neighbors whose support enables us to face the many challenges that lay ahead. As the primary supportive housing agency in Bonner and Boundary counties we are committed to providing the type of services and leadership our residents, communities, and times have come to expect.

Please contact us to see how your gifts can be put to work to help us achieve our goals.

Respectfully,

Craig A. Koester  
President, Board of Directors

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**Bonner County Homeless Task Force  
dba Transitions in Progress Services (T.I.P.S.)**

**2009 Annual Report**

The Bonner County Homeless Task, dba Transitions in Progress Services (T.I.P.S.), was established in 1991 by a group of dedicated volunteers who had the goal of providing shelter to homeless families. By 1994 we welcomed our first residents to Blue Haven, a two-story apartment building in Sandpoint. Subsequently, an adjacent single-family home was leased to provide additional housing. In 2000, we established the Domestic Violence Program and opened Harmony House, a safe house for women and children fleeing domestic violence. In 2002, our Trestle Creek Friendship Center was opened thanks to a grant from the Idaho Housing and Finance Association (IHFA) and volunteer labor provided by AmeriCorps. Located on 5.4 acres near Hope, Idaho, the property has four single-family, 3-bedroom 2-bath homes in addition to the Holland House, a 4-bedroom residence for single women without children.

T.I.P.S. has assisted over 200 homeless families with supportive housing and provided a safe haven to more than 180 victims of domestic violence since its founding.

T.I.P.S is a Non-Profit, 501 3(c) organization.

## **Mission Statement:**

The mission of Transitions in Progress Services (T.I.P.S.) is to help homeless families and victims of domestic violence develop self sufficiency and improve the quality of their lives

## **Core Values:**

### 1). Passion and Respect

We have a passion for, and an unwavering commitment to, ensuring that all families, regardless of circumstance, are entitled to safe housing and a home environment free of domestic violence. We pledge to treat all residents with the respect they deserve at all times and in all aspects of the services we provide.

### 2). Integrity and Transparency

We pledge to conduct every facet of our stated mission with the highest level of integrity to earn and maintain the respect of our residents and benefactors. We will do so with complete transparency in every aspect of our organization.

### 3). Responsive and Creative

We will at all times remain responsive to the needs of our residents and the communities that we serve. We will do so with creative solutions and problem solving.

### **Grant Funding:**

Our Supportive Housing Program (Blue Haven and Trestle Creek) is funded in large part by a grant from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (H.U.D.) which is administered by Idaho Housing and Finance Association in Boise. Our Domestic Violence Program (Harmony House) is funded in large part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), administered by the Women's Center in Coeur d' Alene. Our Domestic Abuse Education Program (DAEP) is funded through user fees. Our total grant funding for 2009 amounted to **\$353,828.22.**

The Supportive Housing grant has been renewed and ensures funding for this program throughout 2010 and into 2011. It should be noted that while this grant allows us to continue providing shelter and basic case management services, funding for the resident services most needed are often lacking. One of the most unsettling results of our difficult economic environment has been the wide ranging cuts by government agencies to basic services that assist our residents. We anticipate these cuts to deepen in the coming months putting additional pressure on non-government organizations (NGO's), such as ours, to take up the slack to continue to provide truly meaningful case management services and help facilitate access to basic medical, substance abuse, and mental health diagnosis and treatment.

Our Domestic Violence (DV) grant, from the DOJ, has not been renewed and will cease funding our DV shelter in October 2010.

In response to the loss of this substantial source of funding, we are directing significant energy at redefining the DV modality for this critical community program. The current goal is to create a woman's advocacy center that would provide basic shelter/counseling services, (for women and children including victims of domestic abuse), food and clothing needs, and convenient access to other local emergency and non-emergency services. In addition, we are currently spearheading an effort to form a women's caucus to identify gaps in services and to develop solutions to fill those gaps.

In 2009, we established a volunteer Development Director position, currently filled by Chris Rinehart, who, as part of our ongoing sourcing effort, researches and applies for funding from a variety of entities including individuals, corporations, private foundations and various governmental agencies. Through Chris' efforts, and those of our program management staff, we have aggressively pursued over \$500,000 in additional funding. While not under the illusion of obtaining all these funds, we are confident that these efforts will bear significant fruit during 2010.

### **Donations:**

We are fortunate to be a part of a large group of non-profit human services agencies serving Idaho's Bonner and Boundary counties. We are grateful for the many donations of household items, food, clothing, volunteer time, and materials in addition to financial support continually offered to us by our generous neighbors. Our cash and in-kind donations, used in part for grant matching purposes, had a total estimated value in excess of \$43,178.69 for calendar year 2009.

### **Program Services:**

Our Transitional Housing Programs at Blue Haven and Trestle Creek provide hope and respect to our residents in addition to a clear path to self reliance and sustainability. Our Program Managers provide each individual and family with professional, hands-on case management services to help set goals and move forward toward stability. Assistance, which can last up to two years, with parenting, budgeting, employment and life skills are integral components of our program. We also assist individuals and families with their basic food, clothing and transportation needs.

Our DV Shelter, known as Harmony House, is an emergency safe house for women and children fleeing domestic violence. It is open and staffed 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Our DV Program provides case management, counseling and domestic violence education as well as necessities such as food, clothing and transportation. Specific assistance is also provided to children living through the trauma of domestic violence situations. Our staff participates in the Bonner County Domestic Violence Task Force and the North Idaho Regional Coordinated Community Response Network to work on improving services to domestic violence victims as well as to prevent and remedy domestic violence in our community.

The Domestic Abuse Education Program (DAEP) presents an opportunity for understanding the cycle of abuse by educating the abuser about the complexities of power and control with the goal of ending the violence. The Court system relies on this program for its mandated treatment. This 52-week classroom program for offenders holds abusers accountable for their actions. The court routinely sentences offenders to this program. This program combines accountability, education and the group process to facilitate change in the belief systems and behaviors of those who abuse. Developing an understanding of healthy relationship dynamics and gaining healthy relational skills is also part of the program.

In addition to the above, we hold a weekly support group for women impacted by domestic violence. This group meets every Thursday at noon throughout the year.

### **Clients Served:**

During 2009, our Transitional Housing programs, Blue Haven and Trestle Creek, housed a total of 101 individuals. We started the calendar year with 83 individuals in service. We currently house 14 families, comprising 60 people including 35 children.

Our Domestic Violence Program housed a total of 16 women and 13 children, a total of 1,333 bed nights.

### **Notable Accomplishments:**

Our most important accomplishments every year are those residents who successfully transition into stable housing with the help of our program managers and the myriad of services they provide. In addition, every year a number of women in our community choose to access our Harmony House domestic abuse services. Approximately 30% of the residents of our supportive housing come directly from our DV program and we're grateful to play a role in their choice to leave abusive situations and begin to rebuild their lives. We remain committed to providing these critical services for the victims in our community.

In November we re-launched our redesigned web site: [www.transitionsinprogress.org](http://www.transitionsinprogress.org)

It is an expanded site which discusses our role in the community, the services we offer and contains numerous helpful links to emergency services and related community agencies and services. Please bookmark this page and visit it often to keep abreast of the latest developments and initiatives. We also welcome your constructive feedback so we can improve the information we provide at the website and facilitate better access to all community services.

2009 marked the first year that we actively participated in and planned a week-long series of events to help commemorate National Homelessness and Hunger Awareness Week. We started with a Circles Big View meeting where we invited/included a number of our local public officials, including the Mayor, several Council members, Sheriff, County Supervisor and head of the School Board. Later that evening we held a candlelight vigil to honor deaths within the homeless community. The following day our first Annual Turkey Feast was a rousing success. Manned by volunteers serving donated food, we fed 200 people in one afternoon. We capped our week with an Open House at Trestle Creek. Through it all we were successful in increasing awareness of homelessness and hunger in our community and garnered several headline articles in the local newspaper, the Bonner County Daily Bee, as well as Spokane's Spokesman Review. You can read these and other stories of note on our web site.

Finally, we have re-committed, as an organization, to being a proactive part of our community, increasing awareness of homelessness and domestic violence issues and seeking meaningful solutions. We have an ongoing outreach program with our service provider collaborators as well as the faith-based community and public officials at the

local, county and State level. We have initiated regular contact with the Mayor, County Prosecutor, Public Defender, Police Chief, Sheriff and Child Protective Services among others.

We continue to strive for complete transparency in all our activities. We are extremely grateful to those community members who have stepped forward during this past year to join our efforts as new Board members and volunteers. Each new Board Member and volunteer brings additional skill sets and an increased enthusiasm to help us fulfill our mission.

### **Goals: New Initiatives/Future Projects:**

Our primary goal and responsibility is to ensure the sustainability of our existing programs and services. We intend to do this by maintaining programs that stand as a model for similar programs around the country in both scope and professionalism in the service of our residents. We will remain diligent in our sourcing efforts to maintain and augment the umbrella of services provided. We will always be completely transparent in all our activities to ensure that our donors and community continue to support our efforts with the knowledge that we will utilize their gifts in a constructive and prudent manner.

One of our goals for 2010 is the establishment of an emergency/warming shelter for temporarily (less than 90-days) displaced individuals and families living in Bonner and Boundary counties. This shelter would be open from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. daily and would provide sleeping accommodations, shower and laundry facilities as well as basic food supplies. In addition, a full time Shelter Manager would provide program management assistance facilitating access to emergency services throughout the community. Limited transportation services would also be provided. This shelter would be the first of its kind in the northern two counties and would fill a critical gap in the continuum of human services.

Another goal is to establish a “help” center to facilitate quick and easy access to all the human services available in the communities we serve. Such a center would be welcoming and non-intimidating, offering immediate, clear and concise information on emergency and non-emergency services including shelter, food, transportation, clothing, household products, firewood, energy assistance, job training/placement and substance abuse/mental illness treatment services. It would be centrally located and staffed by the various agencies involved.

Another important goal is to facilitate and participate in the establishment of a homeless advocacy group covering Bonner and Boundary counties. Such a group would consist of all the agencies and individuals currently serving the client base which includes homeless individuals/ families, the elderly, veterans, children, substance abuse sufferers, ex-convicts, adolescents and victims of domestic violence. It would be charged with safeguarding and promoting the basic human rights and service needs of this at-risk population. It is envisioned that this group would discuss and promote solutions to their client’s daily challenges, particularly where there are gaps in the continuum of services.

As mentioned above, our programs and services are funded primarily through grants. While we are grateful for the funding provided by these sources, we have been aware that over-reliance on grants results in a “roller coaster” planning horizon. In an effort to counteract these forces, we have been studying alternative paradigms. In addition to increasing our community based sourcing programs, it is our goal to create a new small business; a business that could, conceptually, on the one hand provide training and employment for our clients, and on the other hand, provide a stable, somewhat predictable cash flow for the continuation of our activities and implementation of new initiatives. A number of concepts have been considered and we are currently allowing these ideas to ferment before selecting an appropriate idea and proceeding with execution.

Finally, we have a number of initiatives being advanced to improve/enhance our physical plant and facilities this calendar year. These would include, at our Trestle Creek facility, replacing the Manager’s Residence, currently a mobile home, with a permanent residence; rebuilding the roof of our pole/storage building and adding a mezzanine to increase its capacity; and, altering the configuration of Holland House to add more client living quarters; possibly a family apartment. At Blue Haven, continuing our individual unit remodeling program, replacing the exterior siding and re-gravelling/paving the alley are on the agenda.

**Board of Directors**  
**January 2010**

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We are extremely fortunate to have an exceptional staff of dedicated employees who are passionate about our mission. We will continue to treat all our employees with the utmost respect and remain grateful for their efforts.

**Staff:**

Tamie Martinsen: Program Director, Supportive Housing Program  
Lissa Defreitas: Program Manager, Trestle Creek Friendship Center  
Cherie Peak: Program Director, Domestic Violence Program  
Elaine Obenauer: DV Intake Staff  
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