



# **IMPACT REPORT 2016**

OCT 1, 2015 — SEPT 30, 2016

REAL LIFE. REAL CHANGE.



### **National Youth Homelessness**

It is estimated that 1.6 to 1.7 million youth experience homelessness each year (NAEHCY, 2016), approximately 15% have lived on the streets for more than six months (NCFH, 2013) and 5,000 unaccompanied youth die each year as a result of assault, illness or suicide (NCSL, 2013). Almost by definition however, youth experiencing homelessness are difficult to count, as their living situations frequently change, their ability to remain unnoticed is keen and their desire to blend in with peers who aren't homeless is fierce. Attempts are made, using various methods, to estimate the extent of the youth homelessness problem in the United States, in Colorado and locally, but all methods have limitations, so we do not know the full extent of this crisis.

# LIFE ON THE STREETS FOR **HOMELESS AND RUNAWAY YOUTH**



69% of youth at Urban Peak come from Colorado: of those, 97% come from the seven county Metro Denver region. Youth Homelessness in Colorado and Denver

1 in 5 youth experiencing homelessness in the Metro Denver area are living on the streets and the rest reside in shelters or other transitional housing programs (MDHI Point in Time, 2015).

Youth experiencing homelessness live in a variety of unsafe, temporary situations, including cars, parks, abandoned buildings, other people's homes, shelters, and motels. Some are so desperate to get off the streets that when approached by strangers, they will exchange sex for warmth, food, or clothing. (NAEHCY, 2015)

No two youth experiencing homelessness are the same, have the same needs or come from the same backgrounds, but there are certainly common paths to homelessness.



## SYSTEMS INVOLVEMENT

Often family instability leads to involvement in the child welfare system and sadly there is a disproportionate representation of foster care youth among the homeless youth populations.

49% of youth served by Urban Peak in 2015 report past involvement with child welfare. Youth who have been involved in the foster care system are more likely to become homeless at an earlier age and remain homeless for a longer period of time.

Youth experiencing homelessness who have been physically abused are twice as likely to be incarcerated as their peers. Rarely does an individual leaving the correction system have a safe and stable exit strategy which results in a cycle of need for homelessness services and support.

## **ECONOMIC INSTABILITY**

American youth ages 16–24 are experiencing unemployment rates that are twice the national average. The youth unemployment rate in the United States is 11.2% compared to the overall unemployment rate of 4.7% at the end of December 2016 as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In order to afford a one bedroom apartment in the current Denver housing market, an individual working at Colorado minimum wage of \$9.30 per hour would have to work 93 hours per week. For youth with severe and chronic mental health issues, it is even more difficult to find and maintain permanent housing.



One in three youth are approached or recruited by a pimp or exploiter within the first 48 hours of being on the street and 70% of youth on the street eventually become victims of commercial or sexual exploitation (HHS, 2012).

# **ABUSE & VICTIMIZATION**

46% of youth experiencing homeless reported being physically abused, 38% reported being emotionally abused, and 17% reported being forced into unwanted sexual activity (NCSL, 2013)



LGBTQ youth experience an average of 7.4 more acts of sexual violence than their heterosexual peers and are twice as likely to attempt suicide.

NATIONAL STREET OUTREACH **PROGRAM STUDY RESULTS** 

73% Reported Use of Alcohol

65% Reported Use of Marijuana

38% Reported Use of Meth or Heroin

## **HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS**

Youth experiencing homelessness are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviors, including unprotected sex, having multiple sex partners and participating in intravenous drug use. Youth who engage in these high-risk behaviors are more likely to remain homeless and be more resistant to change.

If any of these high-risk behaviors lead to incarceration, it will cost taxpayers \$8,629 per month (per youth), as compared to \$972 to \$2,200 for a journey to success through Urban Peak's services (Justice Policy Institute, 2014).



80% of youth experiencing homelessness use drugs or alcohol as a means to self-medicate to deal with the traumatic experiences and abuse they face (dosomething.org, 2015).

### **FAMILY INSTABILITY**

Most youth have left home due to severe family dysfunction, including abuse and neglect.

20-40% of unaccompanied homeless youth were abused sexually in their homes, while 40-60% were abused physically. Youth who are abused physically are twice as likely as their housed peers to be incarcerated.

Over half of unaccompanied homeless youth have been thrown out of their homes (FYSB, 2014) and 20-40% of them because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender (NAEHCY, 2015).



One in four youth experiencing homelessness are pregnant or parenting (FYSB, 2014). 70% of these same youth said they did not have the option to return home (FYSB, 2014).

# **HEALTH**

Youth experiencing homelessness have a greater risk of severe anxiety and depression, suicide, poor health and nutrition, and low self-esteem. Colorado ranks near the bottom nationally in percapita psychiatric treatment beds reported by hospitals and in the bottom half in per-capita state and federal spending on mental health. The average spending in Colorado for mental health services per-capita is \$21.10 which is well under the national average of \$30.70.



The wait to see a psychiatrist in Denver is about five months. Colorado has only 15 psychiatrists per 100,000 people.

# **URBAN PEAK BY THE NUMBERS**

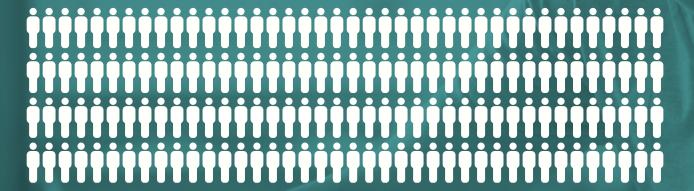
1,814

number of unduplicated youth served by Urban Peak in fiscal year 2016

## URBAN PEAK YOUTH SERVED BY PROGRAM

- Outreach 564
  - Drop-In Center 1,132
- □ Shelter 381

- Education & Employment 418
- ★ Housing 149



Urban Peak served over 200 chronically homeless youth in 2015

[Footnote: Chronic homelessness, as defined by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is based on an individual having both a disabling condition and having been either continuously homeless for a year or more or having had at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years.]

1,816 / 22,666

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS
DURING FISCAL YEAR 2016

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER HOURS OF DIRECT PROGRAM SERVICES TO YOUTH

\$467,000 DIRECT COST SAVINGS TO URBAN PEAK

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Sexual Orientation
77 % Heterosexual
23 % LGB

Ethnicity
74 % Non-Hispanic/Latino
26 % Hispanic/Latino

Race
57 % White
25 % Black or African American
10 % Multi-Racial
5 % American Indian or
Alaska Native
1 % Native Hawaiian/
Pacific Islander
1 % Asian

Education Level		
53 % Some Schooling,		
No Diploma or GED		
42 % High School Diploma		
or GED		
5 % Post-Secondary		









## **SELF-REPORTED BARRIERS TO SUCCESS\***

	2015	2016
Alcohol Abuse	16 %	8 %
ATTEMPTED SUICIDE	26 %	0 %
Chronic Health	19 %	17 %
CO-OCCURING DISORDER	15 %	0 %
Developmental Disability	20 %	15 %
DOC INVOLVEMENT	7 %	0 %
Drug Abuse	28 %	11 %
DYC Involvement	18 %	16 %
Foster Care Involvement	35 %	25 %
GANG INVOLVEMENT	9 %	0 %
Mental Health Issue	44 %	45 %
NEGLECT	27 %	0 %
NO BARRIERS	12 %	0 %
Physical Abuse	24 %	26 %
Physical Disability	10 %	9 %
SEXUAL ABUSE	10 %	9 %

\*NOTE: HUD (Housing and Urban Development) requires agencies serving those experiencing homelessness to collect and track specific information. Significant differences in the above data are a result of data points being removed from the HUD intake questionnaire (uppercase barriers), and a change to the data base that does not allow updates to barriers when additional information is provided by youth after intake.







# **OUTREACH**

Urban Peak employs a specially trained team that provides outreach throughout Denver, seeking out youth on the streets who are experiencing homelessness. The Outreach team distributes hygiene materials, clothing and food to youth in need as they work to develop a sense of trust and build relationships with the youth they meet. The team also works with youth who utilize the Drop-In Center to provide referrals for services such as housing, mental health, and substance abuse treatment both at Urban Peak and through our partner organizations. In addition, the Outreach team helps youth in obtaining the essential documentation (birth certificates, driver's licenses, state IDs, etc.) they need in order to gain employment or housing, enroll in school, or take the GED.

Thanks to your support, in fiscal year 2016, Urban Peak: provided services to **564 YOUTH** living on the streets such as hygiene materials, clothing and food, referrals, and assistance in obtaining personal documentation.

- ▶ **64 YOUTH** received emergency, overnight shelter as a result of working with the Outreach team.
- ▶ 61 YOUTH found safe and stable housing or returned home as a result of working with the Outreach team.

# **JORIE'S STORY**

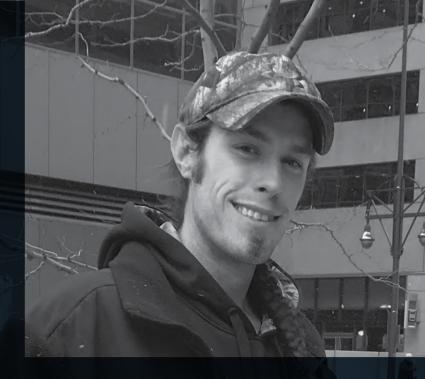
### Real Life

Jorie grew up in an unstable home in small-town Minnesota, dropped out of school in 8th grade, and ran away from home when he was just 16 years old. His father, an alcoholic, frequently lashed out at him with verbal and physical violence – often with a belt – fueling Jorie's anger and hatred towards himself and the world around him. "In a small town with nothing to do and unable to relate to my family, I got involved with hard drugs - meth, heroin, and cocaine - and found enjoyment in doing bad things." Realizing he might be a bad influence on his younger brother and sister, he ran away to travel and pursue a "fast life".

He made his way to Colorado and "squatted on the streets with other junkies" in downtown Denver for close to a year. He finally felt accepted by his "street family" and was able to relate to them in a way he couldn't with anyone else. "We liked the same things, kept each other safe, and took care of each other. It was when I was alone that things got really bad. I wanted to live a fast life but, when I was alone time slowed down, leaving me alone to my own thoughts. I started degrading myself thinking about the things said to me by my old man. I felt like a burned out junkie when I was alone".

# Real Change

In winter of 2006, after a year of living on the streets, Jorie decided he wanted to "find a different way". While he wasn't sure if he was ready, he knew the path he was heading down would eventually kill him, and it almost did. That's when he came to Urban Peak. He first spent a few months in the Shelter and then moved into Urban Peak's STAR (Starting Transition & Recovery) Housing program. While he was living at STAR, he obtained his GED and met with his case manager regularly. "They let me know I wasn't a lost cause. They saw in me what I didn't see in myself, and showed me love when I was in a place where I couldn't love myself." Sadly, during his time at Urban Peak, Jorie relapsed several times and was eventually removed from the program. "One of the most heart wrenching decisions we make as a team is when we have to ask someone to leave the program. Weighing the impact on the physical and emotional safety of both the individual and the rest of the STAR community is typically the deciding factor," says Kendall Rames, Urban Peaks Deputy Director/ Director of Programs.



After he left the STAR program, Jorie went back to Minnesota to be with his family. Shortly after his arrival, he and his father got in trouble one night at a bar eventually placing Jorie in prison for 27 months. During his incarceration, Jorie had time to reflect on his life - the good, the bad - and the tools and resources Urban Peak provided him during his stay in our programs. "Urban Peak helped me identify and understand my emotions, and taught me not to react so quickly. They taught me about hygiene, how to take care of myself, and helped me get an education and realize my own potential. I just didn't get it then, I was too young." "We often hear from youth in Jorie's situation that holding them accountable for their decisions and behaviors is a turning point in their lives. We don't forget these youth, and we are so grateful that Jorie is doing well and reconnected with Urban Peak," says Kendall.

Jorie hit the ground running after he got out of prison. He stayed clean, started his own subcontracting company and now has business both in Denver and Minnesota. At 26 years old, Jorie now uses the coping and foundational skills he learned at Urban Peak, and the math skills he learned in our Education & Employment program every day in his line of work. "Urban Peak planted the seed, and without seeds, you can't grow." Jorie is now 1 year and 1 month sober, and thriving.





# DROP-IN CENTER

Urban Peak's Drop-In Center provides a safe haven where youth can get their most basic needs met including:

- A temporary respite from the outdoor elements
- · A hot breakfast served Monday through Friday
- ·Lockers to keep their possessions safe
- · Laundry services
- ·Showers
- · Access to basic medical services

In addition to helping youth with their basic needs, the Drop-In Center staff offers a listening ear, guidance and support, and provides essential life skills courses in subjects such as:

- · Healthy relationships
- ·Coping skills

- · Womyn's Dinner
- · Mindfulness
- Entertainment
- · Rotating workshops

- Thanks to your support, in fiscal year 2016, Urban Peak:
- Assisted 1,132 YOUTH, the most youth of any program at Urban Peak.
- Served 17,000 MEALS.

**300 YOUTH** who accessed Urban Peak services for the first-time through the Drop-In Center accessed additional Urban Peak programming such as the Shelter or Housing.

# **BRIAN'S STORY**

## Real Life

Brian is a sweet, friendly, sociable guy with a big a heart and a love for sports. He grew up in the Denver Metro Area with his mom and sister, and received special attention at Laradon Hall and Fletcher Miller schools for developmentally challenged children. Life was relatively normal until one evening when he and his mother got into an argument. According to Brian, he was unable to control his emotions and lashed out at his mom. As a result, Brian was sentenced to 80 days in jail. His mother had placed a restraining order on him and his father had a history of domestic violence, leaving Brian unable to return home upon his release. Thankfully, his Probation Officer referred him to Urban Peak's Shelter. "If it weren't for Urban Peak, I'd probably be homeless. I had nowhere to go and I can't even imagine what would have happened to me," recalls Brian. He was scared, vulnerable, and out of options.



Brian lived at Urban Peak's Shelter for one and half years and created great relationships with staff and fellow youth - from shooting hoops, to doing chores, to always being the first to welcome a new youth entering the shelter for the first time. Eventually, Brian returned home to live with his mother, however the same conflict occurred, sending him back to jail. Upon his release, Brian returned to the Urban Peak Shelter and was provided an apartment of his own at Urban Peak's Rowan Gardens, a supportive living community for youth who struggle with a mental, physical, or developmental disability with the goal to help youth learn and grow toward independence. During his time at Rowan, Brian worked closely with our Education & Employment team who helped him study for his GED and secure a job at the Pepsi Center working as an usher, a perfect fit allowing him to stay up to date on the Nuggets and Avalanche! With a stable job and a supportive community, at age 21, Brian was ready for more independence. With Urban Peak's help, Brian then moved into another group home where he still lives today.



"During basketball season, I know I can count on Brian to keep me up-to-date with the latest basketball scores, injury reports, and gossip of the league." says Kendall Rames, Urban Peak's Director of Programs. "I love to hear him laugh when I explain each and every time that I have no idea who or what he is talking about. Staff members are often asked what success looks like: maintaining a job, going to school, making good money, living independently; yes, these are some indicators of success. More importantly, Brian's success is measured by his persistence, kindness, courage, honesty, ready smile and big heart. I look forward to Brian's calls, and am honored to know him."

Now, at age 30, Brian is doing great! He is still working at the Pepsi Center doing both security and continuing his work as an usher, he has rekindled his relationship with his family, and enjoys taking 2Succeed classes offered by MHCD to further his development.







# **SHELTER**

Urban Peak's overnight shelter is the only licensed shelter in Denver serving youth ages 15 through 20 who are experiencing homelessness. Open 365 days a year regardless of weather conditions, the 40-bed facility (50 beds in cold weather) houses two dorms, one for males, one for females, and two private rooms for youth who do not feel comfortable in the larger dorm rooms. During their stay, Shelter participants work with a case manager to create an individualized service plan based on the principles of traumainformed care and Positive Youth Development (PYD) that is designed to help them progress towards self-sufficiency or reunification with family.

The Shelter offers an onsite medical clinic several mornings per week where participants can access vaccinations, HIV and pregnancy testing, specific health screenings, and treatment for the common cold or other illnesses. In addition, the Shelter provides therapeutic services and referrals for youth including family mediation and behavioral health evaluations.

- Thanks to your support, in fiscal year 2016, Urban Peak:
- Provided 381 YOUTH with a warm, safe place to sleep at our overnight shelter.
- Supported youth throughout the duration of their stay; **36 NIGHTS** was the average length of stay per youth.
- Slept an average of 37 YOUTH each night.

▶ 44% OF SHELTER **PARTICIPANTS** 

exited to safe and stable environments (such as renting an apartment of their own or reuniting with their families).

# **BREANNA'S STORY**

## Real Life

Strong, resilient, and brave is the best way to describe 22 year-old Breanna. Born and raised in Denver, Brianna was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) when she was just 12 years old. Her parents were unable to provide the necessary care and treatment she needed so she was taken away from her parents by social services and placed in the guardianship of her aunt. While this initially seemed like a better situation, her aunt stole Breanna's Supplemental Security Income and often kicked Breanna out of the house without warning. Breanna recalls one evening when her aunt forced her to sleep on the streets: "I remember it rained that night and I slept under the roof of one of the light rail stations to try and keep dry. I went to school the next morning soaking wet."

Growing up with constant pain and flare-ups from MS, an unstable home life, and family members taking advantage of her, Breanna was unable to form healthy relationships, claim her independence, or be herself. Brianna questioned her self-worth, attempted suicide numerous time, the first when she was just 8 years old, and was raped as a teenager by a boyfriend she thought she could trust.

# Real Change

Breanna finished high school and enrolled in classes at Community College of Denver. While applying for financial aid and looking for work experience through the Office of Economic Development, she was connected to Urban Peak through the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) program.

At Urban Peak, Breanna met her case manager, Allegra Bell, who became one of the first trusting adults Breanna was able to really talk to. Through weekly meetings, Allegra was able to help Breanna work through her family trauma, identify her education and employment goals, and introduce her to a path to self-sufficiency through trainings, work experience, and a referral to supportive housing – something Breanna desperately wanted. Through Urban Peak's Education & Employment program, Breanna completed Job Readiness Training, received ServSafe and Customer Service certificates, and got a work experience at Peak Thrift where she was hired on as a Youth Associate.



Brianna recently moved into an apartment of her own at Rox's Place, one of Urban Peak's housing buildings for youth either working and/or going to school. "Decisions have been made for me my entire life so living on my own has been challenging and fantastic at the same time. All I have to say is these are my keys, my door, this my house, and I did it!"

"I don't even know what I would have done if it were not for Urban Peak, "says Breanna. "After I was raped by my ex-boyfriend, I had sex with a lot of people to try and cope with what happened. Without Urban Peak's help, I probably would have prostituted myself...not as a career but more as a hobby than anything else."

Reflecting on the past three years since she met Breanna, Allegra says "Breanna is more willing to accept her accomplishments. She's beginning to accept her independence and working to take care of herself. She's resilient, she asks for help when she needs it, and she's taking care of herself. I am so proud of her."





# HOUSING

Urban Peak owns three apartment complexes and operates multiple housing programs throughout Denver designed to meet the distinct needs of the youth, including: treatment for substance abuse or mental illness, adaptive living skills for youth with physical or developmental disabilities, and independent living skills for youth who are exiting the streets or child welfare services.

Every young person served through our respective housing programs is provided with a case manager who practices the principles of trauma-informed care and Positive Youth Development (PYD) to help the youth set goals and obtain the services they may need to thrive. The ultimate goal of Urban Peak's Housing programs is to support the youth as they work to build the confidence and skills necessary to find and keep their own safe and stable housing.

Thanks to your support, in fiscal year 2016, Urban Peak:

- Provided supportive housing for **149 YOUTH** in their own apartment.
- ▶ 100% OF YOUTH received individualized, strength-based case management and skilldevelopment opportunities to increase their ability to achieve self-sufficiency.

- ▶ 88% OF CLIENTS who exited housing exited to safe and stable living environments (such as renting an apartment of their own or reuniting with their family), with **10 MONTHS** average length of
- ▶ 77% OF YOUTH maintained housing for six months or more.



Through our education and employment services, Urban Peak helps youth on their respective paths to self-sufficiency by achieving academic and employment success. Urban Peak offers individual and small group instruction to help youth obtain their GED (General Education Development) certification, re-enroll or engage in high school to complete remaining coursework needed to graduate, or apply for post-secondary educational opportunities through college or technical school. Urban Peak's employment services include a Job Readiness Training course focused on hard and soft skills training such as cover letter and resume development, job search techniques and interview skills, job retention training, time and money management, and more.

### **REAL LIFE**

Thanks to your support, in fiscal year 2016, Urban Peak:

- Served 418 YOUTH through education and employment.
- **210 YOUTH** participated in employment services at Urban Peak.
- ▶ Hosted 50 YOUTH at annual career and networking fair.
- ▶ Tutored 134 YOUTH through Urban Peak's GED preparation class.

## **REAL CHANGE**

- **99 YOUTH** obtained employment in Fiscal year 2016.
- **22 YOUTH** obtained their GED.
- ▶ 45 YOUTH earned their ServSafe Food Handler Certification or Customer Service and Sales Certification through the National Federation Foundation.
- ▶ **OVER 70%** of ServSafe certified youth obtained employment in the food services or hospitality fields.



# **Celebrating 1 Year In Business!**

Peak Thrift, a social enterprise of Urban Peak, helps youth experiencing homelessness and youth at risk of becoming homeless overcome real life challenges by providing essential job training and a supportive work environment.

### Location

4890 Pecos Street Denver, CO 80221

### **Store Hours**

Monday - Friday 10am - 7pm Saturday 10am - 5pm Closed Sunday

## Shop. Donate. Volunteer.

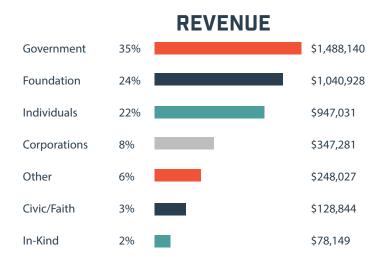
Since it's inception, Peak Thrift has provided youth with job skills to prepare for self-sufficiency and created earned revenue for Urban Peak.

- ▶ 10 YOUTH participated in subsidized Youth Training positions.
- **5 YOUTH** were hired as Youth Associates.
- **80% OF YOUTH** trained and employed demonstrated skills gained.
- 4 OF 5 YOUTH Associates maintained employment for six months.

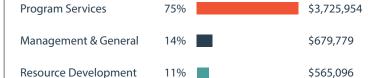
Visit peakthrift.org for donation guidelines and additional information.



# **URBAN PEAK DENVER FY2016**



# **EXPENSES**



# **TOTAL EXPENSES \$4,970,829**

# **TOTAL REVENUE \$4,278,400**

### **ASSETS**

Cash & Equivalents \$131,496 Investments \$367,448 **Accounts Receivable** \$527,096 **Prepaid Expenses** \$62,433 Property & Equipment, net \$5,338,928

**Total Assets** \$6,427,401

### LIABILITIES

**Accounts Payable** \$23,553 **Accrued Expenses** \$49,515 Other Current Liabilities \$73,445 **Notes Payble** \$2,617,562

**Total Liabilities** \$2,764,075

### **NET ASSETS**

Unrestricted \$3,247,745 Temporarily Restricted \$288,354 Permanently Restricted \$127,227

**Total Net Assets** \$3,663,326

### TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS \$6,427,401

# SENIOR STAFF

Kim Easton CEO

**Kendall Rames** Deputy Director | Director of Programs

Malinda Anderson

Director of Finance | Interim CEO

Cheri Reynolds **Director of Human Resources** 

Joshua Zmroczek

Director of Development & Public Affairs Shawna Rae Kemppainen

**Executive Director Urban Peak Colorado Springs** 

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