

Annual Report on the State Of Homelessness in Erie-Niagara Metropolitan Area



2014

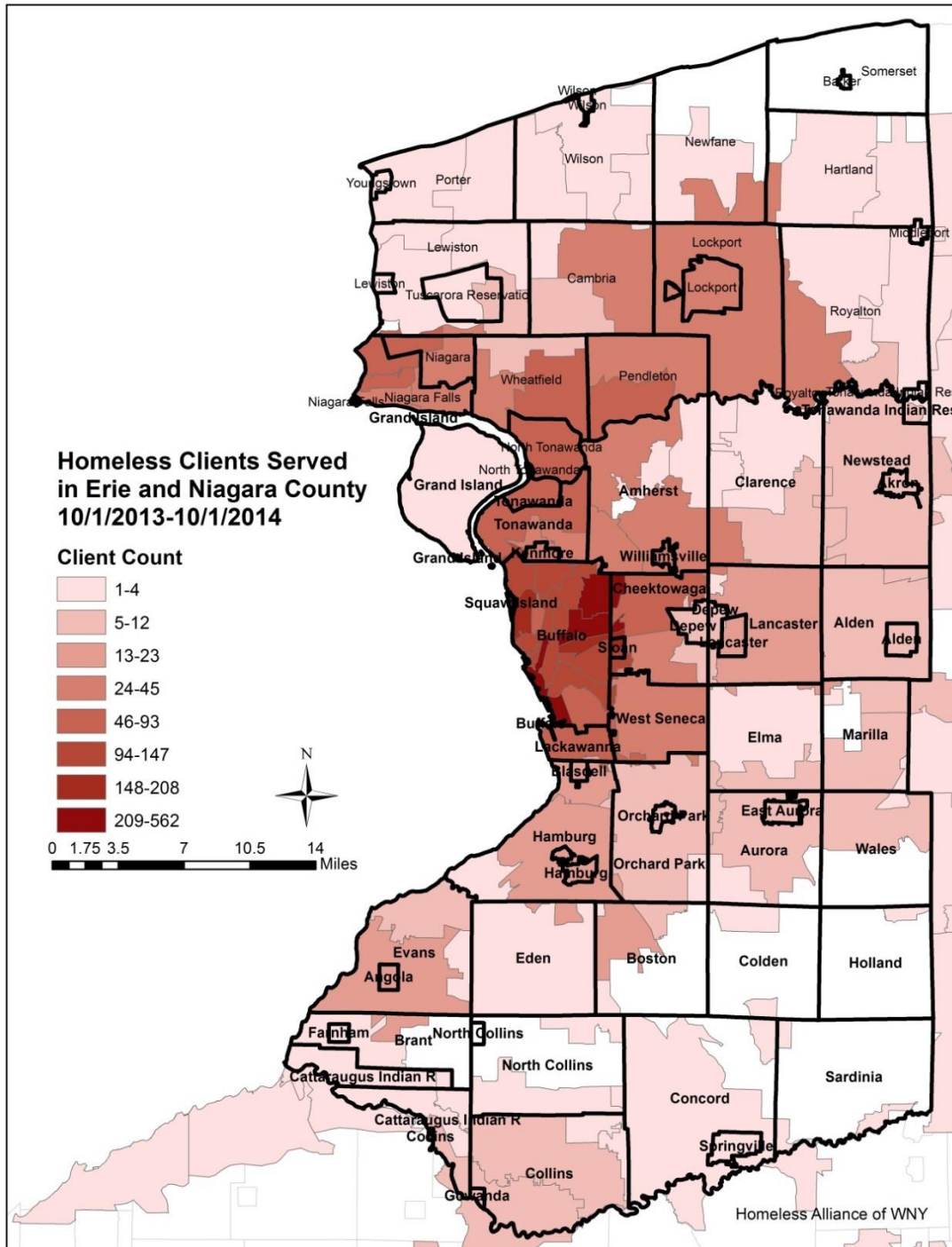
Executive Summary

“Ending Homelessness does not mean that nobody will become homeless, but that effective systems will be in place to help people become housed again rapidly.”

-Nan Roman

President, National Alliance To End Homelessness

Erie-Niagara Metropolitan Area



Key Findings

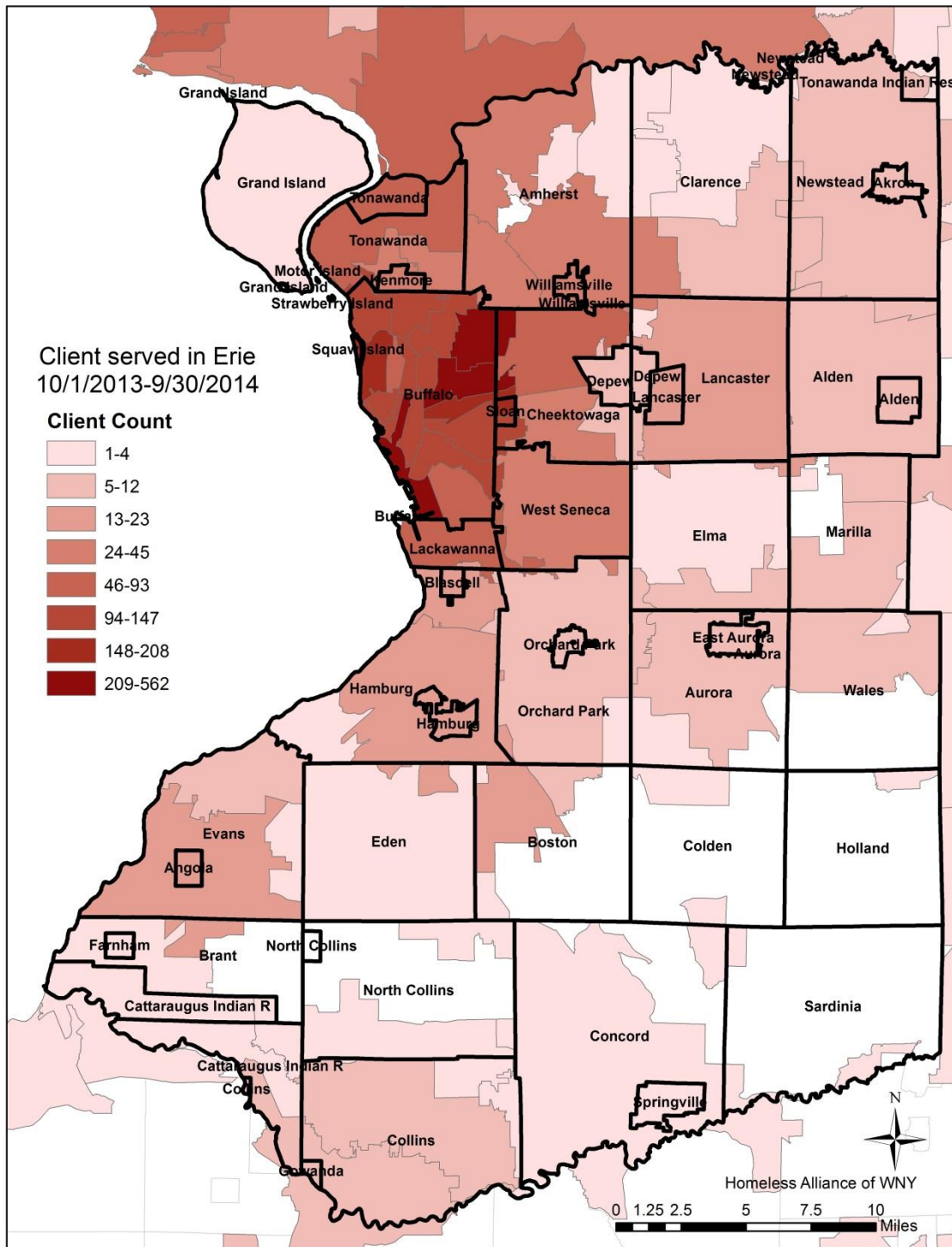
- This is our first report featuring combined statistics since we merged with Niagara County two years ago. 7,948 people experienced homelessness in the Erie-Niagara region from October 1 2013 to September 30, 2014 (federal fiscal year). This will serve as a baseline for future reports.
- 6,126 people in Erie County and 1,888 people in Niagara County experienced homelessness (66 were served in both counties).
- An estimated 1,115 people in the Erie-Niagara Region are homeless on any given night, 940 people in Erie County and 175 people in Niagara County.

	2014 HMIS	2014 Estimated Total Count
Total	4,432	7,948
Erie County	4,046	6,126
Niagara County	452	1,888
Both	66	66

Point in Time Count	Unsheltered Homeless Count	Sheltered Homeless Count	Total
January 30, 2013	98	886	984
January 29, 2014	64	936	1000

Adults experiencing homelessness	Total	%	Without Children	%	With Children and Adults	%
Male	1,937	63%	1,847	71.7%	90	18%
Female	1,138	37%	722	28%	416	82%
Transgendered	6	0.2%	6	0.2%	0	0%
Total	3,081		2,575		506	

Erie County



Key Findings

- There was an increase of 372 people experiencing homelessness in Erie County that can be attributed to more single individuals, including unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness and the effectiveness of street outreach activities in identifying those in need.

Program Type	2012 HMIS Count	2012 Estimated Total Count	2013 HMIS Count	2013 Estimated Total Count	2014 HMIS Count	2014 Estimated Count
Total Unique Homeless Persons	3,465	5,681	3,948	5,754	4,448	6,126
Emergency Shelter	2,316	4,558	2,481	4,710	2,839	4,996
Transitional Housing	642	768	713	775	539	602
Safe Haven	22	22	22	22	23	23
SSO	712	712	1,266	1,266	1,337	1,337
Outreach	137	137	223	223	389	389
Jan. and Jul. Unsheltered count	226 (Jan & Jul)	226	98 (Jan)	98	177 (Jan + July)	177

- The number of persons in families entering shelters DECREASED by 8%.
- An estimated 508 families, mostly single mothers, entered shelters.
- 26.6% of those experiencing homelessness were children under the age of 18 and half of these children are not yet school age.

	Total	%	Without Children	%	With Children & Adults	%	With Children Only	%	Unknown
Under 5	424	9%	0		350	26%	0	0%	1
5 – 12	401	9%	0		342	26%	0	0%	1
13 – 17	386	8%	0		131	10%	199	100%	
18 – 24	507	12%	311	14%	163	12%	0		1
25 – 34	723	17%	469	21%	190	14%	0		2
35 – 44	642	15%	453	20%	112	8%	0		
45 – 54	770	17%	618	27%	38	3%	0		
55 – 61	300	7%	278	12%	5	0%	0		
62+	126	3%	119	5%	1	0%	0		
Don't Know/Missing	170	2%	0	0%	8	1%	0		52
Total	4,448		2,510		1,482		277		180

- The average length of stay in shelters has dropped by 33% in the past three years from 36 days to 24 days thereby reducing the trauma caused by homelessness.

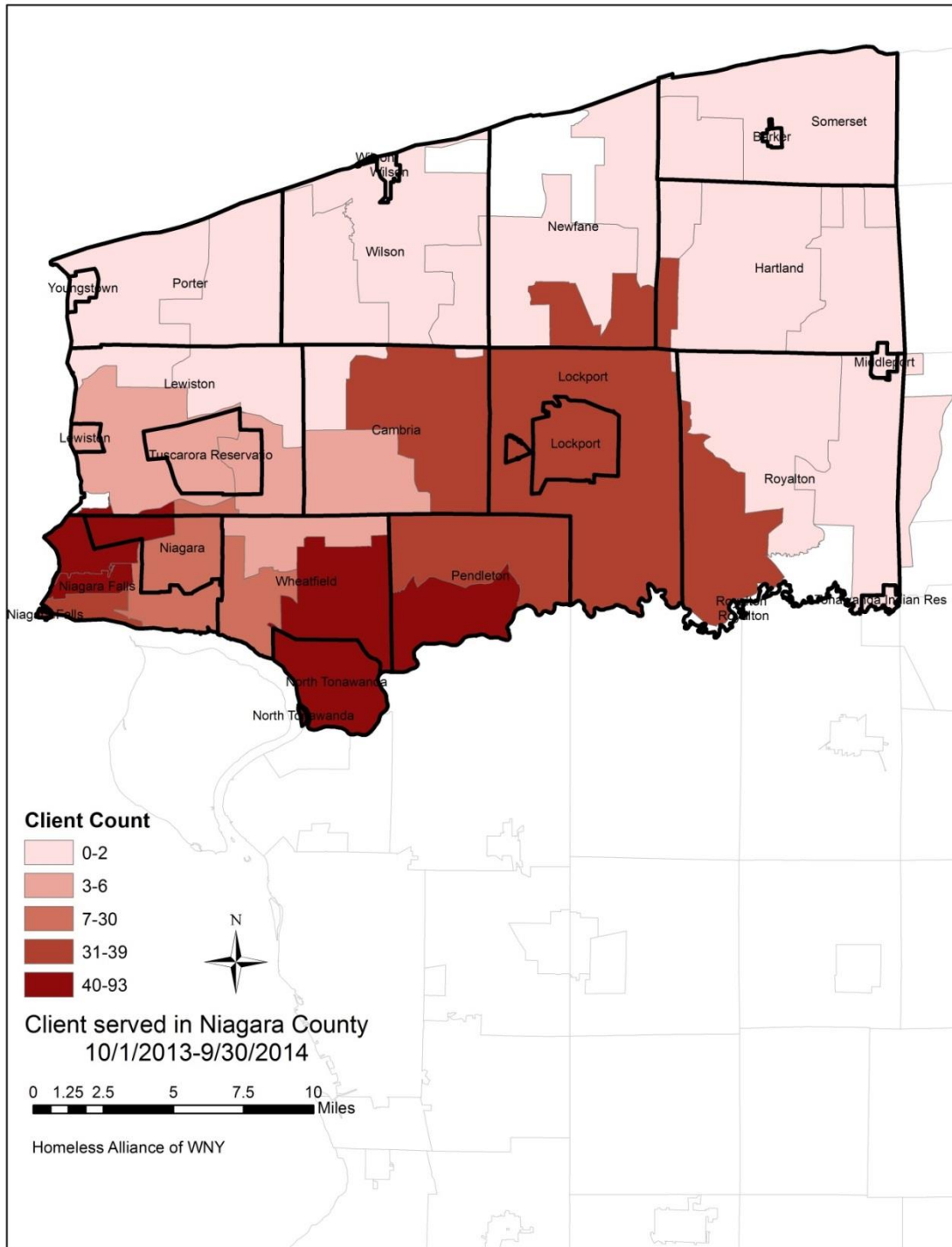
Clients who left the program at the end of the report period		
	Average	Median
2012	36	19
2013	29	13
2014	24	11

- The most logical way to reduce homelessness is to serve those entering shelters multiple times. 117 people in household with children and 564 adult individuals experienced two or more episodes of homelessness in the past two years. The Coordinated Entry system needs to target this population for increased services in order to reduce homelessness.

Total People in Households	First time Homeless	Repeated Homelessness	Repeats from last year's repeated homelessness
Household with Adults and children	902 39.6%	117 15.4%	5 3%
Household with only adults	1128 49.6%	564 74%	166 88.8%
Household with only children	245 10.8%	81 10.6%	16 8.2%

- There were fewer Veterans identified in HMIS last year, 240 than the previous year, 257. The number of female homeless Veterans was the same at 41. This data is incomplete because the VA has its own database.
- As a Continuum of Care, all of the providers are making substantial progress towards ending Veterans homelessness and chronic homelessness. Ending homelessness does not mean that no one will ever experience homelessness again but that effective systems will be put in place to house people again rapidly.
- More people are entering Transitional Housing directly from shelters, which is a positive trend.

Niagara County



Key Findings

Program Type	2014 HMIS Count	2014 Estimated Count
Total Unique Homeless Persons	452	1,888
Emergency Shelter	414	796
Transitional Housing	39	160

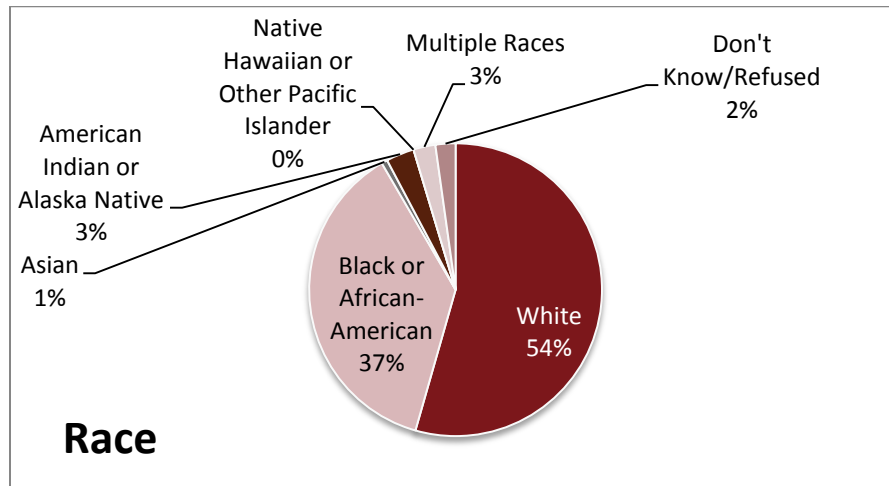
- The average length of stay in shelters is 26 days.

Clients who left the program at the end of the report period		
	Average	Median
2014	26	11

- 36% of people experienced homelessness lived with family or friends prior to becoming homeless.
- A total of 96 youth under 18 experienced homelessness, including unaccompanied youth and teen mother with her child. A total of 65 young adult age 18-24 experienced homelessness. Together they consist with 35% of the overall homeless population recorded in HMIS.

	Total	Percent	Without Children	Percent	With Children and Adults	Percent	With Only Children	Percent
Under 5	25	5.5%			20	32.8%	5	0.1
5 - 12	14	3.1%			11	18.0%	3	0.0
13 - 17	91	20.1%			3	4.9%	88	0.9
18 - 24	65	14.4%	49	16.7%	15	24.6%		
25 - 34	87	19.2%	79	27.0%	8	13.1%		
35 - 44	73	16.2%	69	23.5%	4	6.6%		
45 - 54	58	12.8%	58	19.8%	0	0.0%		
55 - 61	24	5.3%	24	8.2%	0	0.0%		
62+	14	3.1%	14	4.8%	0	0.0%		
Don't Know/Refused	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0
Information Missing	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0
Total	452	1	293	1	61	1	96	1

- 37% of people who experienced homelessness are African American, and 54% were white. Comparing to people living in poverty, African American is over-represented in the homeless population.



- Limited HMIS participation makes it very challenging to estimate the overall homeless population and the needs. HAWNY will continually work with providers to get on HMIS in order to have a better picture of homelessness in Niagara County.
- As a Continuum of Care, all of the providers are making substantial progress towards ending Veterans homelessness and chronic homelessness. Ending homelessness does not mean that no one will ever experience homelessness again but that effective systems will be put in place to house people again rapidly.

Recommendations

- There is tremendous need for safe affordable rental housing in the community. In addition to overall affordable housing, Erie-Niagara region can use 500 single room occupancy units for individuals.
- The HAWNY staff will continue to research cost effective prevention strategies.
- Expand the HMIS coverage rate and improve data quality to obtain a more comprehensive and reliable data system. The trend in decision making and planning is to base funding decisions on data. The more accurate and complete our data becomes the better planning and decision – making this community will have.
- Continue to refine the Coordinated Entry/Assessment process to ensure it adequately addresses the needs of those experiencing homelessness.
- As funding is reduced, we need to better coordinate available resources from federal, state, local and the private sector to end homelessness. CDBG, HOME, general funds and tax credits must be utilized for homeless populations.
- More Living Wage jobs are needed in order to stem the rise of poverty and, as a result, homelessness.
- Now that the Continuum of Care includes Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming counties we need to develop partnerships to effectively assist those experiencing homelessness and address the unique needs of those living in rural communities.
- The number of homeless households with children decreased slightly last year. Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds and CoC funds could be used for Rapid-Rehousing. National research has indicated this model is successful in working with homeless families as most people need only modest and short-term assistance. The Coordinated Entry system needs to target this population for increased services and/or transitional housing in order to reduce homelessness.
- As more Rapid Re-housing funds become available, the funds need to be made available to individuals as well as families.
- With the freeze on new HUD funding for homeless programs efforts need to be increased to identify new resources through local or state funding if we intend to have a positive impact on those experiencing homelessness.