

## Project FIND

### Identifying Information

Client Name: Libardo Huertas Ruiz

Case Record #: 31230

D.O.B: 07/12/1953 Age: 68

Date of Referral: 12/11/2019

SSN: 583-50-8150

Social Worker: Maria Ortiz, BSW

Address: The View Hotel Queens NY

Report Prepared: November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

Phone: 929-500-8150

### Reason for Report

This report was designed to gather and assess Mr. Huertas' data and is required to complete the HRA supportive housing application. The client is aware that a report is being prepared for this purpose. (This report was prepared for academic purposes as well.)

### Reason for Social Work Involvement

Mr. Huertas was referred to Project FIND and became a member to the Homeless In Reach program to perform some basic activities of daily living and access services such as taking showers, receiving clean sets of clothing, and grabbing free meals. He has been living in places not meant for habitation for more than five and a half years. The last time he worked was about 30 years ago.

Mr. Huertas has decided to seek assistance to apply for affordable housing because he no longer wants to be a street homeless. He agreed to reside at the View Shelter Hotel Program while he gets placed in permanent housing.

### Source of Data

Information for the assessment is based on intake interview with Mr. Huertas that took place in the HIR program office on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.

### Family Background and Situation

Born in Vieques, Puerto Rico, Mr. Huertas was raised by his mother and is the oldest of eight half-siblings (six brothers and two sisters). They identified as Catholic. Mr. Huertas knew his father although not as a paternal figure since he did not live with them. He indicated having a happy childhood though his mother was extremely poor and many of his material basic needs were not met, forcing him to move with his grandparents at the age of eight until they died, and then he went to the streets.

Mr. Huertas' parents, grandparents, and three of his siblings are all deceased (the mother died three years ago), but he remains in close contact with his other five siblings. He is single and has no children. Mr. Huertas reported that his longest and most meaningful

relationship lasted for one and a half years and lived in his romantic partner's apartment. He has never had housing of his own and has been residing at a shelter since March of this year.

### **Physical Functioning and Health**

Mr. Huertas reported psychiatric history of schizophrenia and multiple past hospitalizations [over 10 times] due to depression, kidney stones, and hypertension diagnoses for which he does not see a doctor or take medication. Mr. Huertas denied being on medication other than Thorazine and Benadryl.

Mr. Huertas indicated he does not think that his diagnosis of schizophrenia is correct but says that medication "keeps me more calm". No history of violence, suicidality, alcoholism, or substance abuse.

### **Intellectual Functioning**

Mr. Huertas graduated from Puerto Rico's Francisco Oller High School in 1971 and reported academic success early in life when he was accepted in medical school as part of the City College and Columbia University partnership, hoping to become a doctor after attending New York City College of Technology for 3 years in an attempt to earn his associate degree in 2014.

Mr. Huertas described himself as a "good student". He indicated to be 9 credits away from receiving this degree in 2014 until he started to experience a decline in function, characteristic of schizophrenia, which attributed to becoming homeless and dropping out of college.

### **Emotional Functioning**

Mr. Huertas described himself as "sometimes depressed but alright, I'm stabilized". He has never been violent, aggressive, or suicidal. Mr. Huertas reported being hospitalized several times, the most recent being 10 months ago because he was feeling depressed. He has decreased psychological functioning due to auditory hallucinations and delusional thoughts.

Receiving housing search assistance and having access to basic resources and services to perform activities of daily living extremely encourages Mr. Huertas. He is excited to accomplish goals such as finding a home, a job and finishing school.

### **Interpersonal and Social Relationships**

Mr. Huertas reported having very few friends (not very close relationships) due to his "poor social skills" and "lack of trust in people". His siblings remain in contact regularly. Mr. Huertas had an "excellent" relationship with his grandparents and was grateful for their support.

Mr. Huertas' most meaningful romantic relationship ended over 35 years ago. He dated and cohabitated with this woman in her apartment for one and a half years. Mr. Huertas has not had other lasting relationships ever since.

### **Religion and Spirituality**

Mr. Huertas grew up in a Catholic family but does not identify himself as such because he has not been to church or read the Bible since he was a child. He reported to believe in God but attributed his beliefs to his grandparents for raising him with values and principles and taking care of him until they passed away.

### **Strengths and Problem-Solving Capacity**

Mr. Huertas expressed being extremely motivated and excited about living in his own apartment, finding a good job, and going back to school to complete what he left halfway through, yet he recognizes there are mental functioning limitations such as depression which he often experiences. He has difficulty identifying strengths, other than being bilingual, and is often in denial of his schizophrenic diagnosis.

### **Economics/Housing/Transportation**

Mr. Huertas currently relies on Social Security benefits, SNAP, and Medicaid combined with community social services which he uses to sustain himself throughout the month. He indicated to never lived on his own and currently resides at the View Shelter Hotel Program in Queens, courtesy of Bowery Residents' Committee. When needed, Mr. Huertas uses NYC public transportation to travel.

### **Use of Community Resources**

Mr. Huertas receives services at Project FIND Homeless In Reach program since December 2019, and at Safe Haven since March of 2021 that help him perform basic daily activities such showering, receiving clothes, grabbing food, sleeping, and picking up mail.

### **Impressions and Assessment**

Mr. Huertas often deals with depression, but most of the time he seems extremely excited regarding the aspect of finding suitable housing, maintaining his mental health with the proper support system, and most important to him is completing his associates degree and finding gratifying employment. He presents disorganized and tangential speech, concreteness and at times perseverative thinking, guardedness, and paranoia, primarily due to delusional thoughts and hallucinations.

As a chronically homeless single adult who deals with a serious mental illness, Mr. Huertas needs to be considered for housing with features and settings that would allow him to receive assistance and support in maintaining his mental and physical health, as well as vocational and job training.

### **Goals for Work with Client**

Housing options need to be explored; findings will be shared with Mr. Huertas. In order to help him make the necessary decisions toward achieving these goals, it is important for both parts to

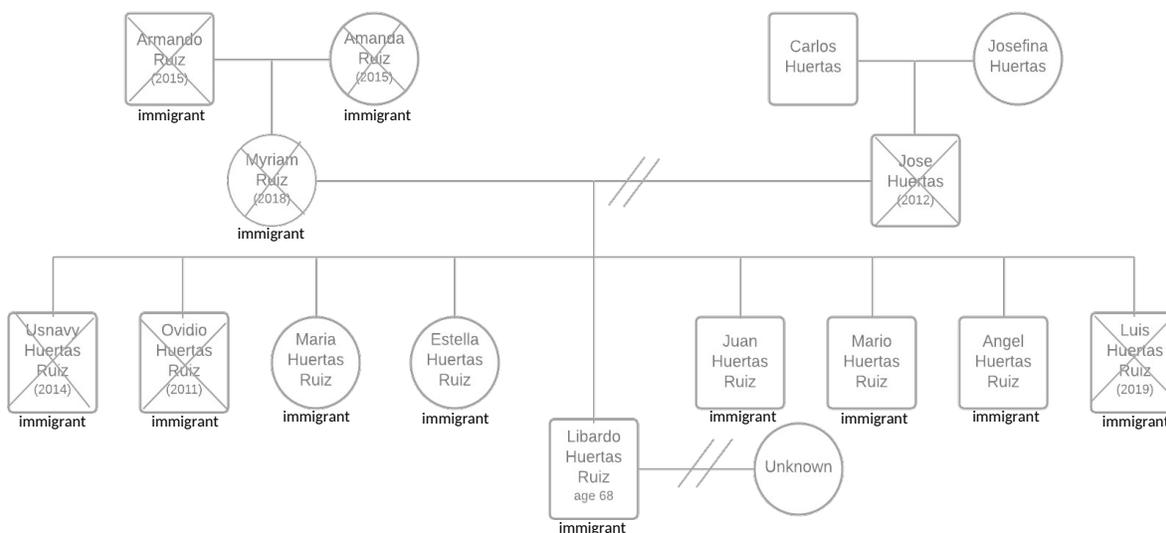
remain engaged in the process. The program staff must follow up and provide him with the support and assistance needed to enhance his well-being. Once placed in permanent housing that meets Mr. Huertas' needs, the program will provide him with aftercare services for 90 days to support the adjustment to his new home and environment.

## Genogram

Figure 1 illustrates that Mr. Huertas had solid, positive relationships with his family members, with the exception of Jose Huertas, his father, who was absent from Mr. Huertas' and his family's lives. The relationship with his siblings can be described as neutral, while the relationship with his grandparents (on his mother's side) can be observed as being very strong and positive. Mr. Huertas maintained a solid relationship with his mother despite the fact that her great poverty prevented her from meeting his basic material needs. Regarding Mr. Huertas' relationship with his father was a contentious one marked by alienation since he was never there as a parental figure. Moreover, Mr. Huertas' most supportive relationships were with his grandparents (on his mother's side) who cared for and supported him until they died.

That being said, intervention at this time would involve focusing on strengthening Mr. Huertas' relationship with his five siblings, as they do not have any other living family members. It is critical that everyone supports one another as a family and maintains a loving, solid, positive sibling relationship.

Figure 1: Libardo Huertas Genogram



## Ecomap

Figure 2 illustrates that Mr. Huertas used to receive significant support from his grandparents while they lived. Currently, Mr. Huertas' most important and positive connections that strongly support him are the entitlements including Social Security benefits, SNAP, and Medicaid, which he uses to sustain himself throughout the month. Then he has important and positive connections with Project FIND and Safe Haven, which are agencies that provide him any

services and programs required to meet basic needs and enhance his well-being. Mr. Huertas has neutral connections with the shelter as he no longer wants to reside in temporary housing neither in the streets. Last, his connection with college is quite tenuous although he continues to be interested in completing his associate degree as soon as possible.

In order to support and empower Mr. Huertas, it is most important for him to have access to medical care to treat any health problems and diagnosed mental illnesses because this will significantly improve and protect his well-being. Also, he needs support to be placed in permanent housing that meets his needs so that he feels encouraged by achieving such important goal, followed by helping him get financial aid to complete his college degree in order to get a stable job. Aftercare services that incorporate CTI-EBP, emotional support, financial advisement, and therapy are strongly recommended to support and empower Mr. Huertas in the process as to prevent him from going back to living in the streets and facing different types of discrimination that jeopardize his health and well-being as a 68-year-old immigrant.

Figure 2: Libardo Huertas Ecomap

