



House the Homeless, founded in 1989, is the oldest, all volunteer, action organization fighting to *combat, end and prevent* homelessness in Texas and all across North America.

YEAR IN REVIEW 2020: COVID-19 & Beyond: Education, Advocacy & Direct Help

We hope you and yours are well. Thank you for supporting House the Homeless (HtH). This unprecedented year began with our HUGSS thermals event, led by P.J. Liles and Will Hyatt, at First Baptist Austin. We are committed to providing these **Winter survival items** - Hats, Under-thermals, Gloves, Socks, Scarves + PPE (masks, sanitizer), flashlights, safety whistles, and/or other goods. **For this new year, 2021, we're prudently determining the safest distribution options based on fluctuating facts and COVID-19.**

In the past 12 months, at least 256 men, women, children and a baby died while homeless in Austin. Their names were read at the virtual **Annual Memorial Service, thanks to Caritas**. Since March, we have responded to the pandemic by providing PPE and safety information to our friends in need. This includes serving those at Camp Esperanza (designated land by Gov. Abbott) and make-shift camps. We have worked with central area Austin churches and others to assist with critical needs. Richard and Sylvia have hand-made hundreds of masks, sharing them in Austin and through the National Coalition for the Homeless in Washington, D.C. HtH has kept its eye on local, state and national efforts to help folks while standing against policies that criminalize homelessness. On Tax Day and Labor Day, 2020, we gathered on bridges with banners, i.e., **UniversalLivingWage.org**. In his HtH Board role of National Education Director (NED), Richard continues to promote "**Livable Incomes**" as an economic solution to homelessness so that anyone who works a 40-hour week can earn wages to afford basic housing; and that the SSI stipend would be increased so those unable to work can afford housing. Richard has also raised funds to cast a **second Home Coming statue** and warehouse it in D.C. Site discussions temporarily halted by the pandemic, while our first **Home Coming statue** can be visited at *Community First! Village*.

Since March, on a case-by-case emergency basis, we have provided some tents, sleeping bags, storage assistance, phones for job searches, care appointments, transportation (bus passes and an occasional bus ticket to reunite family). We see many successes, such as John, a Vet, who lost his home to a flood. He now has housing, works as a security guard, and desires to help others. We learned from Caritas that a gentleman had lost his tent shelter to a fire; we immediately provided an even better replacement for their distribution. Melissa and Cruz were provided a large tent and help with essentials to prepare for Winter. Now employed by The Other Ones Foundation, this couple repeatedly tells us how much *the gift cards, bus passes help, along with ongoing moral support and prayers have helped!* We are helping to provide Christmas gifts for the two daughters and an 18-month-old son of a formerly homeless Navy veteran, as well as transportation so he can look for a job as the mom, who is disabled, cares for the children. YOU help to make this & more happen.

We appreciate you. A gift of \$100 will help us provide a tent, sleeping bag, and local transportation while \$40 will help to keep a stock of essentials. Any amount helps HtH continue our education, advocacy and direct care. Gifts may be made at www.HousetheHomeless.org or mailed to POB 2312, Austin, TX 78768. For more information, please call 512-565-1388 anytime.

Cecilia Blanford
President

cc: Richard R. Troxell, Founder; Will Hyatt, Chaplain, VP; Greg Gibson, Blythe Plunkett