



House the Homeless, Inc.

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(512) 796-4366 www.HouseTheHomeless.org

www.UniversalLivingWage.org

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

Year In Review 2013

It has been an amazing year! Mobile Loaves and Fishes got the final go-ahead for the RV Park that creates an entire community for our disabled homeless citizens. HTH is proud and honored to play a small role and help get those good folks the disability benefits that will enable them to live there.

The Thermal Underwear Party on January 1st and the numbers served continues to increase. We expect to serve even more next winter. Again, we outfitted them all with lifesaving thermal tops, bottoms, hats, gloves, socks, and rain ponchos. Being that school children raised a major portion of the costs, we are hoping other contributors will help us reach our lifesaving goal this coming year. Remember there are no more than 701 emergency shelter beds for up to 6,000 + folks who will be stuck outside on any wintry night in the Austin area.

For over 18 years, we have printed our Plastic Pocket Guides. This is the 13th printing and up-date #13. Our laminated resource guide folds down to fit in the pocket. We have again printed and distributed 10,000 of these useful guides to homeless services. Call to get yours.

We held our Annual Memorial Sunrise Service on Sunday Nov. 17th at 6:57am. It was again held on Auditorium Shores. Sadly, we remembered more than 130 women, men & children who died while homeless in Austin. City Council Member **Mike Martinez** was the keynote speaker and **Alan Graham** led us in a special prayer of thanks and our very own long-time volunteer and supporter **Sara Hickman** graced us with song.

HTH led the nation with our White Paper on the Prevention of Homelessness. **Awesome!** This game-changing document has just been mailed to all members of the U.S. Congress, all 50 governors, select cabinet members, President Obama, and Mrs. Obama. We're convinced that you and I are the Agents of Change that everyone is seeking. To see this powerful document, go to www.HouseTheHomeless.org We are now raising funds to send it to every Mayor in the nation. We're all dealing with the **fallout** of homelessness...this is how to **prevent** it.

Finally, our clients were asked the survey question, "How does it make you feel to be homeless?" Over and over again, the answer that came back was, "I feel invisible." In response, this year I studied under sculptor Steve DuBois and sculpted "The Homecoming." It is a chance encounter of a homeless veteran (veterans make up 1/3 of people experiencing homelessness), his daughter (who represents the average age of a homeless person, 9 years old), and an elderly African-American woman (representing the disintegration of family and that people of color are overly represented in the homeless population with 65%). Note- She had three children, two of whom survived into adulthood, but they drifted away from the mother after the father left one day and never returned home. She could not sustain the family home and now carries all her worldly belongings as she trudges through the darkness. She is coming from nowhere and going nowhere. Their encounter represents the spirit of giving, civility, and community, when people lose everything and end up carrying all their worldly belongings on their backs and yet *rejoice* in the gift of sharing, offering fellowship and kindness. We want to put a **face** on homelessness and this is how we will do it!

Two world-renowned sculptors, seeing the sculpture story in the Austin American Statesman, have contacted us and offered their skills to sculpt our concept into full **life-size** statues ... at reduced costs. **This is separate and apart from all of our other programs.** You can go to our statue link at www.HouseTheHomeless.org and participate in making this *beacon of hope* a life-size bronze statue and help show the people who have not experienced homelessness, that millions are experiencing it, feel invisible as a result of it, and need special help to get through it. Again, this project is totally separate from any other program including the Thermal Underwear Project. It's just another opportunity to help people engage where they feel comfortable. You can always specify exactly which of our programs you wish to contribute to and the funds will **only** go to that designation.

Blessings,

Richard R. Troxell

