

The Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless:

is a unified, social action group, fully committed to its ultimate goal: the eradication of homelessness with respect for the dignity and diversity of its membership, the homeless and the community. The Coalition performs three areas of work: coordinating services, educating the public, and grassroots organizing and advocacy.

YES! I want to end homelessness in Cincinnati!

The more support we have from the community, the further our efforts reach. GCCH's work is possible only with the help from member organizations and generous individual gifts.

Organization Members: Our members may receive: voting rights at our General Body meetings, Streetvibes subscriptions, Speaker's Bureau engagements, discounted printing services, and more.

Individual Members: (at a minimum of a \$50 donation) receive a one-year subscription to Streetvibes, our quarterly newsletter, and you may also attend General Body meetings. If you are interested in an individual or organizational membership please contact the Coalition at 513.421.7803

Thank you for giving generously!

Please consider making a contribution today!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:
\$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ \$150 ___ Other \$ ___

Enclosed is my individual membership (minimum of \$50) including a one-year subscription to Streetvibes. _____

Donate Online at www.cincihomeless.org or make check payable to:
Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless
117 E. 12th Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202

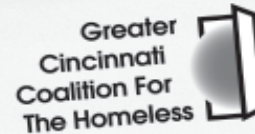


117 East 12th Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

513-421-7803

www.CinciHomeless.org

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*Summertime and the living is easy
-Gershwin*

Dear Friends,

As I now approach my third summer at the Coalition, I realize once again how very hard it is to be homeless in the summer. In the winter, bitter cold nights bring out compassion for people living on the street and the media flocks to area shelters to present sympathetic "hard luck" stories.

Yet every spring, sure as the Reds' opening pitch, the media starts a barrage of negative stories about homeless people. From panhandlers waiting to rip you off to the "eyesores" living under bridges, the public finds itself bombarded by hostile stereotypes and misrepresentations of people without homes.

One reason for this is that homeless people become much more visible in the summer. Yet for every homeless person that you see, there are literally thousands that you don't: men, women and children who work, go to school, and look just like someone with a home.

Also like clockwork, each summer our family shelters are filled to overflowing with homeless women and kids. Even more horrifying is the rise of violent crimes against homeless people in warmer months. In May alone, the Coalition has confirmed reports of one rape and one murder. The sad truth is that these senseless crimes might not have happened if the victims had safe homes to go to.

This is why your summertime donation to the Coalition is so needed and appreciated.

Our **education** program breaks through stereotypes to uncover root causes of homelessness and generate year-round compassion. Through **coordination of services**, we bring together over 45 member agencies to consistently find creative ways to meet the increasing need in our community. Our **advocacy** efforts have led to the organizing of homeless temporary labor workers (see "I am the Face of Homelessness" interview). These men and women work eight to twelve hours a day under awful conditions for minimal pay. The Coalition is also pleased to continue our work with the Affordable Housing Advocates to provide affordable housing for all Cincinnatians.

By supporting the Coalition, you are supporting systemic change, justice, and hope. You are also helping to make summertime a little easier for everyone touched by homelessness.

Sincerely,
Georgine Getty
Executive Director

Since we Last Spoke

Education

- The Education project has continued to receive praise with successful implementation in a growing number of Cincinnati High Schools. Our Education Coordinator continues to communicate with educators and students to improve the Teacher's Guide, and market the unit to additional schools. In the upcoming fall GCCH hopes to target more Cincinnati Public Schools to reach the largest possible audience of students.
- The Speaker's Bureau and *Streetvibes* paper also continue to spread the word about homelessness and social justice issues. Contact the coalition today to receive your *Streetvibes* subscription, or for more information about how to bring our Speaker's Bureau to your school, church, or community group.



Protesting budget cuts at the state capital

Coordination of Services

- The minimum standards committee has scheduled agency site visits for late July. The committee includes representatives from our member agencies, the Health Department, and the city. The committee will check each agency to verify that they meet health, personnel, and safety standards to ensure quality shelter and services for Cincinnati's Homeless.
- GCCH continues to work closely with the Affordable Housing Advocates (AHA) and Cincinnatians for Affordable Housing (CAH). AHA has received funding to hire a summer intern to research and compile information on best practices and housing issues while staffing the AHA board as they develop a strategic plan. AHA has agreed to contract with GCCH to house the intern.

Advocacy

- GCCH continues to work with the 1.5% coalition in their efforts to restore the human services funding from the city's general fund. Please see the action alert below and contact the coalition for more information. The issue will re-emerge in city hall on June 13 and GCCH will be working to mobilize support at this meeting.
- Our Civil Rights VISTAS are currently collaborating with the Worker Center of Cincinnati to address injustices faced by many temp labor workers.
- The Ohio Coalition of Homeless Advocates has been granted 8 AmeriCorps VISTAS to be placed throughout the state. GCCH will house the administration of this project, as well as the lead VISTA as these volunteers work to implement statewide advocacy around homelessness issues, and continue to work on Civil Rights. Our new VISTAS service will begin in July.

Historically, the City of Cincinnati allocated 1.5 % of the general fund to social services and empowered the Human Services Advisory Committee, (HSAC) to review agencies, make site visits, and rate each agency on its effectiveness. The integrity and fairness demonstrated by HSAC helped to enhance the collaboration and effectiveness of social service agencies competing for the same resources. This process was dissolved this past year, and much of the funding was lost.

Over time, ignoring a fair and innovative funding process coupled with slashing 1.5 percent from the general budget will greatly diminish the quality of life for everyone in our community.

GCCH has been working with other concerned Cincinnatians to ask the City of Cincinnati to restore the HSAC process and to restore the 1.5 percent of the general fund to human services.

Take Action Now! Call your City Council Members, or call GCCH to get involved and sign the petition.

I am the Face of Homelessness

Interview by Rachel Lawson

The Civil Rights Work Group has been organizing meetings in collaboration with the Worker Center. The goal has been to discuss the problems employees of temporary employment agencies face, and examine possible solutions. At our first meeting there was an individual who offered his time and dedication to a cause he believed in. Thomas Wallace, Jr. and the many other individuals who have played an active role in the Civil Rights Work Group meetings have been instrumental in pointing out the injustice and mistreatment that comes along with not only needing employment, but also being homeless.

Thomas Wallace, Jr. was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio. After spending time in jail he was paroled to the Diversify Halfway House in Columbus, Ohio. Because he was unable to find employment, a common barrier for ex-offenders, he transferred to a transitional house for parolees. Thomas turned to B.V.R. (The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation) since they assisted him in the past and they were once again successful in helping him gain employment at the Hyatt Hotel Regency. Thomas points out that B.V.R. was useful because they provided job training and were functional in helping him to utilize and recognize his skills, something that was seriously needed after spending 16 years in prison.

Starting over again, Thomas relocated to Cincinnati in December of 2004, where he lived with his sister. After a dispute, he found himself spending the night at Washington Park. Deciding not to spend another cold night outside, he went to the Drop Inn Center. Although he has been homeless only for a short while, Thomas has witnessed a lot. Pointing out that the Drop Inn Center and other agencies offer efficient case management, he also states "you might be homeless, but you still need food and clothes...you're already at your lowest." In general when you first become homeless, especially if you are new to a city, there are essential things that you need such as identification, a birth certificate, and a social security card. Thomas also pointed out there are a lot of elements that might impact an individual's ability to gain a sturdy foundation: employment, housing, food, etc. Unfortunately before you can access those amenities you have to possess the right clothes and transportation to gain employment, which will provide the housing and food that you need. Thomas has taken steps on his own, for example setting up an appointment with the local branch of B.V.R. who was helpful in the past with accessing employment, and seeking CCHB for housing assistance. Triumphant, Thomas stated "although I am homeless and unemployed now, I know, given some time and the right opportunity, I will find my place here in this city."

Wish List

- Supplies - The Coalition is always in need of paper products and office supplies such as paper towels, toilet paper, copy paper, and paper cups.
- Volunteers - We currently need volunteers to help with out with the Annual Dinner Planning Committee. We can also use volunteers on a regular basis to help with basic office duties.

Give us a call today! 513-421-7803 x 16

Check out our website:
www.CinciHomeless.org



Thomas Wallace Jr.

Contact Us

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