



RESCUE MISSION NEWS

2017 Spring



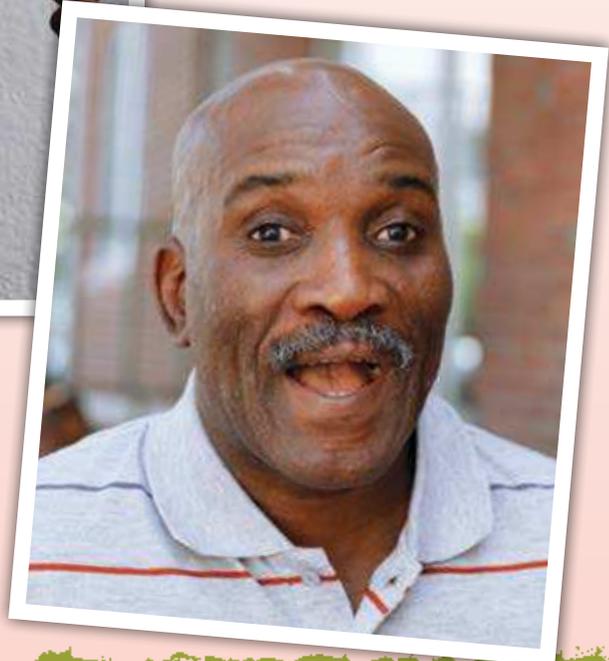
A PUBLICATION OF BRIDGEPORT RESCUE MISSION

The Start of Something *good!*



The simple decision to walk through the Mission's door can mean the start of something good for a homeless man, a broken woman or a needy family. A hot meal begins the process of rebuilding stamina and strength. A prayer of encouragement leads to renewed self-esteem. A computer training class sets in motion the steps to finding a stable job.

Because of your goodness—the kind compassion you show through your gifts and prayers—we are there for every individual who seeks our help. *Inside, please read about the "good" taking place every day, in so many ways, at Bridgeport Rescue Mission.*



www.BridgeportRescueMission.org

SERVING THE HUNGRY, HOMELESS AND ADDICTED OF COASTAL FAIRFIELD COUNTY

Get Connected

Dear Friend,

He stood and walked to the front of the room where our staff and New Life students meet for a weekly general assembly. The intent of this weekly meeting is to inspire, inform and encourage life transformation. Each week, everyone has the opportunity to speak to their challenges and progress. Bob would not likely attract anyone's attention. However, with his few words you knew "something good" had begun and it was dramatic!

He told of his family—11 children... an abusive, alcoholic father... the death of his 3-year-old brother. Bob, then 13 years old, was blamed for his brother's death. What followed was a life of guilt, addiction and enough money to support his destructive lifestyle. As I empathized with his tragic story, I thought, "My God! Without a miracle, this guy will never overcome his past!"

Bob shed some tears (most of us did), he started to smile, then told of counseling with our men's director, MaryAnn Gardner, a few days earlier. She helped him find God's forgiveness and leave behind the lies and life choices that had crippled him. He said for the first time since he was 13 years old he was free! He knew he was forgiven, and the guilt was gone!

Bob is 64 years old and "something good" has started! When did it start? I don't know. Perhaps with a praying grandmother, or MaryAnn's decision to work at Bridgeport Rescue Mission, or when Bridgeport Rescue Mission was started 24 years ago, or when donors like you decided to support our ministry with your gifts and prayers. Thank you!

In His Service,



Rev. Terry Wilcox
Executive Director



Executive Director Terry Wilcox, along with the Mission's Sous Chef Freddie (left) and Chef Pat (middle), are grateful for our newly renovated kitchen where hot, wholesome meals provide a good start for a day of learning and growing.

Bridgeport Rescue Mission

1088 Fairfield Ave.
Bridgeport, CT 06605
(203) 333-4087

BridgeportRescueMission.org

Rev. Terry Wilcox
Executive Director

Donna Romano
Director of Marketing

All stories and photos in this newsletter are of students and guests at Bridgeport Rescue Mission.



Fighting Poverty
from the Inside Out
and Serving the
Hurting and
Homeless of Coastal
Fairfield County

A GOOD START TO A Bright Future

After losing his job... then his car... and finally being forced to leave the home he shared with a relative because of his drug use, 23-year-old Joshua lived on the streets for nearly a year. "I had nowhere else to go," he says. "I didn't want to be a burden on my family." When he grew tired of being cold and hungry, he came to our emergency shelter, where a safe bed and a hot meal were the "good start" he needed to turn his life around. Today he's growing in his faith, embracing our guidance and looking forward to living on his own. "Life is starting to get better!" he says.





Supportive Housing Offers the Next Step to a Good Start



“I thank God for giving me the courage to come up these steps and to be where I am today!”

—Sammy

Graduation from our New Life Program is recognition and acknowledgment of the many forms of transformation that have taken place in a man or woman’s life. Our graduates have regained their sobriety... adopted healthy habits and positive behaviors... repaired relationships with loved ones... and become an active part of a Christ-centered community.

Yet the transition from the Mission’s care to the “real world” can present many challenges, not the least of which is securing stable employment. Our new Men’s Supportive Housing Program (MSHP) provides graduates of our New Life Program as well as other Christian programs with transitional housing, case management and in-house apprenticeship positions to assist them in their transition to independent living.

Sammy is one of the program’s first participants, and he proudly tracks the length of the sobriety he’s worked hard to achieve. “It’s been one year, two months and three days,” he recently shared. Years of alcoholism cost him his job and his home. He was sleeping in his car—then it was stolen. “I had nowhere to go, so I came to Bridgeport Rescue Mission,” he says.

Sammy is currently in the “job search” status of our program, working with a case manager to create a specialized plan for locating employment or determining if additional education or job training is needed. Apprenticeship status is offered for men who apply for and are accepted into a position within the MSHP. Men on work status have jobs with a sustainable income. All men are asked to pay a sliding fee based on their income or are assigned community service projects until employment is secured.

To provide a foundation of accountability, men connect weekly with a sponsor, a spiritual advisor and a pastor—a team dedicated to helping them maintain their positive path. Men also attend outside recovery groups and continue their involvement in a local church.

Residents of the program are also required to perform chores to help with the daily operation of the Mission, such as sorting donations for our Food Pantry. “Whatever needs to be done, I do it,” Sammy says, always serving with a joyful heart.

For most men, the duration of the MSHP is one year, but the ties they form with one another, their sponsors and the staff will continue to provide a network of support as they return to their communities, prepared to lead independent, productive and godly lives.



To learn more about this vital new program—including financial needs and volunteer opportunities—contact MaryAnn Gardner at (203) 331-8982, ext. 101 or MGardner@BridgeportRescueMission.org.



Please clip and share with others.



Monthly Giving Partners

Keep the *good* Going!

By pledging a gift of \$15, \$25, \$35 or more each month, our **Monthly Giving Partners** provide a predictable stream of operational income to help Bridgeport Rescue Mission meet expenses averaging over \$250,000 each month. This foundation of support allows us to be better stewards of our resources and, as a result, provide a more effective outreach of programs and services to meet the needs of our neighbors who are homeless and poor. And because gifts can be automatically charged to a credit card, monthly giving offers an efficient and trouble-free way to support the Mission all year round.

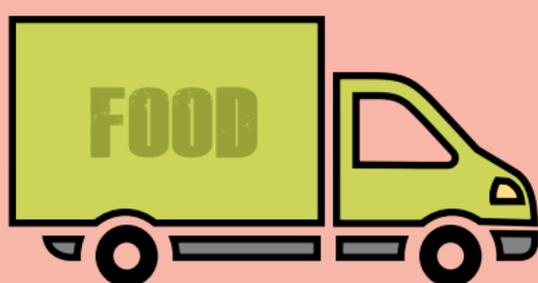
If you're not already a **Monthly Giving Partner**, we encourage you to become part of this vital group. Simply check the box on the reply card and we'll contact you to set it up. For more information, please call Beth Hall at (203) 333-4087, ext. 103.

"It is an honor to support and work with Bridgeport Rescue Mission. They do such wonderful work helping so many who are fighting every day to simply survive. I am blessed to be associated with such an organization, offering hope and healing to the Bridgeport and Norwalk communities."

— John Skelly, Monthly Giving Partner
and Mobile Kitchen volunteer

A Call to Our Church Partners...

Bridgeport Rescue Mission invites your congregation to continue the good work you've started, through these important 2017 outreach projects:



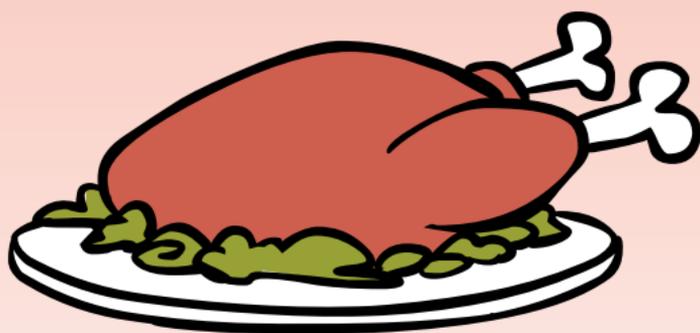
Stuff-A-Truck—Hold a drive to collect the thousands of nonperishable food items needed to prepare the meals we serve year-round in our dining room and from our Mobile Kitchens. Simply select a Sunday and the Mission will station our truck in your church parking lot to collect your congregation's donations. To schedule a **Stuff-A-Truck Sunday** and for a list of the items most needed, contact Courtney Pandolfi at (203) 333-4087, ext. 112.

Spring Cleaning for Coats—

Your congregation's donation of winter wear they no longer need will help us provide the more than 15,000 coats we distribute to our less fortunate neighbors during the holiday season. Coats, jackets, scarves, hats



and gloves – for children and adults of all sizes – may be dropped off at our Donation Center, 1069 Connecticut Avenue, Unit 2B, in Bridgeport, Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Great Thanksgiving Fixin's—Once again this year we'll provide more than 48,000 Thanksgiving meals in our dining room, from our Mobile Kitchens, our Food Pantry Program and our **Great Thanksgiving Project**. Please help by organizing a food drive for all the "fixin's," including turkeys! For a list of foods needed and delivery instructions, contact Courtney Pandolfi at (203) 333-4087, ext. 112.



THANK YOU FOR the Holidays

Turkeys for holiday meals... toys for children and blankets for families... coats to keep people warm. For all this and more, we thank the scores of donors, volunteers and corporate sponsors who made our annual holiday outreach possible.



CORPORATE COMPASSION IN ACTION

We're grateful for the holiday and year-round support of these generous partners:

Gold Partners

Affinion Group
G.E. Capital
PrimeLine
Reed Exhibitions

Silver Partners

Barrow Street Advisors
People's United Bank

Bronze Partners

Anholt Services (USA), Inc.
Bank of America
BizMark
Mercedes-Benz of Fairfield
R.D. Scinto, Inc.

Copper Partners

Arbour Lane Capital
Cannondale Business Solutions, Inc.
Citizens Bank
Grafton Data System, Inc.
Koskoff, Koskoff & Bieder
Newtown Savings Bank
Unilever

A Special Note of Gratitude . . .

Stamford-based **Affinion Group**, a global leader in loyalty and customer engagement, launched an official corporate partnership with Bridgeport Rescue Mission in 2016. The partnership brings the Connecticut-based corporate leader alongside the Mission's work to fight poverty and help our hungry and homeless neighbors in Fairfield County. In addition to financial support, Affinion Group established an ongoing employee volunteer program, including a year-round calendar of events and team-building activities that will benefit the Mission and bring increased awareness to the plight of those who are hungry and homeless in our region. We're grateful to this partner for its many levels of support.



Your Ongoing Gifts Start Something Good Every Day of the Year...

For those who are homeless

- Emergency shelter, meals and clothing for homeless men, women and mothers with children
- Faith-based addiction recovery, along with spiritual guidance, case management and life-skills training
- Referrals to medical, legal and other social-service agencies
- Supportive housing and guidance as program graduates seek employment and transition into the community

For struggling neighbors in Bridgeport and South Norwalk

- Food, clothing and household items for low-income families and individuals
- Holiday distributions of warm coats and Food Pantry Bags



From our Mobile Kitchens

- Meals served daily throughout Bridgeport and South Norwalk
- Encouragement offered by volunteers from local churches, synagogues, businesses and civic groups
- Clothing and other items distributed to meet needs in impoverished neighborhoods



Your continued support is deeply appreciated. Please send a gift today!