

# NCH . NEWS . . .

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Hello,



This is the April edition of NCH News and the first edition using the e-newsletter format.

Information on how to unsubscribe is found at the bottom of this email. If you would like to receive a print version of this newsletter please contact [mneck@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:mneck@nationalhomeless.org).

The photo to the right is a model church covered with scripture, built by a man named Michael. Michael's story and his church are featured in Jim Wallis' book [God's Politics](#).

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### NCH Has New Office Digs

From 4 p.m. until 7 p.m., Thursday, April 28, NCH is showing off its new office headquarters. In January, NCH moved into office space at the Church of the Pilgrims, 2201 P St., NW (Dupont Circle area of DC).




Local homeless advocates, providers, homeless/formerly homeless people who are involved with our Speakers' Bureau, national organizations, donors, supporters and NCH board members will all be in attendance.

The new office location will also house the "Images of Homelessness" portrait art exhibit done several years ago by Tammy DeGruchy, formerly from West Virginia. The NCH office will be the permanent location for this 22 portrait collection and will be unveiled at the open house.

Being located in the church is a perfect fit for NCH. The Church of the Pilgrims houses a Pilgrimage Retreat Center for young people who come to DC to learn about social issues and do community service. NCH's Faces of Homelessness Speakers' Bureau speaks nearly 50 times a year to various  
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Homelessness Speakers' Bureau speaks nearly 50 times a year to various youth groups who stay at the Pilgrimage Retreat Center. The church also sponsors an Open Table meal program on Sunday afternoon serving on average about 50 people.

#### 2005 COOL Conference

Michael Stoops and Michael O'Neill attended the 21st annual Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) Idealist National Conference, which was held at the University of California-Berkeley, March 18-20, 2005. 

At the COOL Conference they held five workshops. Illegal To Be Homeless: Criminalization of Homelessness, Urban Plunge, How to Bring a Faces Panel To Your Campus/Starting a Speakers Bureau, Involving Homeless People in the Movement to End Homelessness, Faces of Homelessness Panel.

Over 1500 college students from across the nation attended over 150 workshops ranging from issues of Fair Trade Coffee, Globalization, to our own Illegal To Be Homeless: Criminalization of Homelessness workshop.

There was an opportunities fair with over 60 non-profit organizations answering questions and promoting their organization. Organizations like Americorps, Peace Corps, National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness, Habitat for Humanity, Oxfam America and many others.

NCH will be at the 22nd annual COOL Conference, which will be held at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee next March, as announced at the opening ceremonies.

Nearly 100 people came to the Faces of Homelessness panel workshop to hear six stories from six young adults: Glenn, Mark-Anthony II, Doug, Adam, Sean, Erik and Jamie, who shared their very personal stories and experiences of being homeless on the streets of Berkeley.


Many of the students stayed 45 minutes after the workshop ended to talk with the panelists. Many of the panelists stay at a shelter called, YEAH (Youth Emergency Assistance Hostel) that was open 18 weeks this year and was founded three years ago by Sharon Hawkins Leyden and a small group of dedicated and passionate women from the Berkeley area, who wanted to help people in need, especially the young adult population. The YEAH shelter is for men, women 18-25 years old and families.

Students were shocked with the hate crimes and new laws that have been passed targeting the homeless. The "20 Meanest Cities" report also drew some interesting dialogue among the students. Many of the students who attended the Conference passed out sandwiches, granola bars and talked with people on the streets of Berkeley, where there is a very large homeless population at places like Telegraph street and People's Park.

Overall, the 2005 COOL Idealist National Conference was a success. Over 200 students attended the five workshops that NCH offered  
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260 students attended the five workshops that NCH offered.

NCH joins forces with Give Us Your Poor

 Give Us Your Poor: Homelessness & the United States is a Boston-based project to address the national issue of homelessness through a comprehensive approach. On April 5<sup>th</sup> Give Us Your Poor launched the Bringing It Home Dinner Series

Bringing It Home is a national dinner series in homes around the country to support Give Us Your Poor and partner organizations, while raising awareness and engaging people in ways to help end homelessness. This year NCH is proud and honored to be a partner with Give Us Your Poor for the Bringing It Home Dinner Series.

At the launch party on the 5<sup>th</sup>, local supporters, educators, partners, people experiencing homelessness and formerly homeless individuals gathered to support this great initiative. Cherly Middleton spoke about her personal experience of becoming homeless with her three children. Cherly reminded everyone in attendance of the importance of raising awareness of the diversity of the homeless population. Her young daughter, Kyla, sang two beautiful songs about strength and determination. John McGah, director of Give Us Your Poor, spoke eloquently about the rising need for awareness and advocacy in the struggle to end homelessness.

Give Us Your Poor is producing a documentary film that explores the many faces and experiences of people experiencing homelessness in America. A fifteen-minute trailer that documents the daily experiences of people experiencing homelessness or on the verge of becoming homeless in Santa Fe New Mexico was shown.

Give Us Your Poor and NCH invite you to host a House Party to raise funds for and awareness about the struggle to end homelessness. A house party can be as formal or as casual as you choose. Give Us Your Poor and NCH will help you every step of the way to make sure that your party is a success. You will be provided with talking points, a copy of the film trailer, and a checklist for your event.

The most important aspect of the Bringing It Home Dinner Series is that you are opening your home to family and friends to share your belief that ending homelessness does not just have to be a dream, but will one day be a reality with your and their support.

You will be receiving more information concerning your participation in the Bringing It Home Dinner Series soon. Please contact Molly Neck if you have questions about Give Us Your Poor or the dinner series.

[www.giveusyourpoor.org](http://www.giveusyourpoor.org)

Dinner At Six



“Tell them we’re not bad people”  
-Josie

“Let them know we want to work”  
-Ray

NCH is proud to offer the moving book, Dinner at Six by Helen Hudson. In the mid-nineties Helen Hudson chose to do what thousands of volunteers do every year, work in a soup kitchen. Her story is different because Helen Hudson chose to engage with the guests of the many programs she volunteered with. Dinner at Six is the product of her many conversations with countless number of homeless and hungry people that ate everyday in the soup kitchens of Hartford.

The publication of this amazing awareness tool is a labor of love. Thomas Lane, Helen’s son, decided that their family should self-publish the book and donate the books to organizations that worked with and on the behalf of people experiencing homelessness. Since the first publication in 2002 the book has helped raise funds for organizations across New England. NCH is honored to be able to bring you another great awareness tool. This book is yet another way to place a face on the issue of homelessness.

The price of the book is pay what you can, with a suggested donation of \$15.  
**100% of your donation will fund the critical work of the National Coalition for the Homeless.** Please contact Molly Neck to place your order today.

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#### Speakers' Bureau Recruitment

On Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> a Speakers' Bureau recruitment meeting was held at the NCH office.

Service providers in DC, Virginia, and Maryland were contacted about the meeting and asked to promote the Speakers' Bureau to their clients. The response from both service providers and clients was positive and we were able to reach a new audience.

Veteran speakers along with potential speakers, all women, gathered to discuss participation in the Speakers' Bureau. Francine Triplett, one of our veteran speakers recently acquired her food handling license and we were lucky enough to taste some of the delicious food she prepared for us, chicken wings, meatballs, macaroni, tuna salad and a platter of veggies.

At the meeting we discussed the mission of the speakers' bureau, what we do, the rules, communication and respect and about adding story summaries/bios onto our website with pictures. Our veteran speakers talked to the prospective new speakers, answering questions they had about the bureau.

We also discussed the Homeless Empowerment Project, and establishing monthly Speakers Bureau meetings. At the meeting I also promoted Street Sense and gave everybody a copy of Street Sense and a Street Sense business card.

We will be having another recruitment meeting in mid-summer, the date will be announced soon.

#### NCH on the Road

**From April 15th to May 15th, NCH staff members will be speaking at the following events:**

*Michael Stoops, Acting Executive Director:*

May 3rd- National Network of Tobacco Prevention and Poverty, Chicago

*Molly Neck, Director of Programs:*

April 19th- "Experteas" on Affordable Housing, Somerville NJ

*Michael O'Neill Coordinator Faces of Homelessness Speakers' Bureau:*

April 15th- University of Northern Iowa

April 20th- Willamette University, Oregon

#### Announcements

In the coming month NCH will be launching a new policy-focused newsletter. Please visit [www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org) for further information on how you can subscribe.

The Give Us Your Poor (GUYP project, a national public awareness initiative based at UMass Boston), is seeking homeless or formerly homeless people who are also musicians to be featured on an awareness-building and fundraising CD.

-GUYP, a partner of NCH, is accepting audio submissions from anyone interested in being considered-they can help you record a demo if needed. The artists chosen for the CD will be collaborating with celebrity artists to create original music for this project and they will be paid. The CD is a companion to the *Give Us Your Poor: Homelessness & the U.S.* documentary film and will be recorded and released by Appleseed Records ([www.appleseedrec.com](http://www.appleseedrec.com)). The CD will also be made available to homeless organizations that wish to use them as fundraisers.

-Submissions should be 1-3 of the artist's best songs/performances (please include which are the favorites if more than 3 tracks are submitted.) We are looking for a great amount of variety of submissions. No style of music is off limits. Please include brief bio information (Where are you from? Age? When and how long were you homeless? etc...)

-Please remember to include all contact information with submission.

-Contact information for a personal reference should be included.

-Arrangements can be made to record artist if no previous recordings are available

-Please give any submissions to you local participating homeless outreach center, or contact: **Nils Gums, project liaison** 617-304-6419,  
[nilsgums@hotmail.com](mailto:nilsgums@hotmail.com).

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