

# NCH . NEWS . . .

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NCH News - September

This is the September issue of *NCH News*.

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## **NCH on Bill Moyers Journal**

Brian Davis, Board member for the National Coalition for the Homeless, appeared on Bill Moyers Journal on July 18 in a segment focusing on the mortgage crisis. Among other things, he had this to say:

In Cleveland now, we have so many people who are entering the shelters that it's nearly impossible to accommodate an intact family: Mom and dad and kids. So, it's almost 100 percent likely that you will have to split up your family. Moms will go to one shelter. Dad will go to another shelter. And even sometimes they have to give kids to relatives, because we just don't have enough space in our shelter system...

Everything that you do that we take for granted everyday is extremely complicated, once you become homeless, and once you don't have a stable place to rest your head. For many people, it's a real struggle to get up everyday and try to face this insurmountable problem of, "Where am I gonna live tomorrow?" And, "How am I gonna find housing?" And, "How am I gonna afford this?"

Taking a look at how the crisis has affected the Cleveland neighborhood of Slavic Village, the program also includes words from various area politicians and activists. To watch this episode or read a transcript, click [here](#).

## **NCH Mourns Dr. Madeline Stoner**



The National Coalition for the Homeless was saddened to learn of the passing of Dr. Madeline Stoner, Richard M. and Ann L. Thor professor of urban development at the University of Southern California, on July 13. She was 70.

Dr. Stoner, who had been part of the USC faculty since 1980, employed her abilities not only in academia, but also in community projects and policy advising. In addition, she authored *The Civil Rights of Homeless People*, a pioneering work on the topic.

Dr. Stoner collaborated with NCH, and at the time of her passing was working with us on a project to evaluate various cities' implementation of Ten Years Plans addressing homelessness. Our thoughts are with her loved ones.

### **“Couch Surfing” Raises Awareness**

Youth in Oswego County, New York will soon be enacting a novel idea to raise awareness of teen homelessness: “couch surfing”. Sponsored by ACT (Assets Coming Together) for Youth and Street Outreach Services (SOS), the project will involve youth sleeping on couches in public spaces throughout the county and providing passersby with information about the issue.

According to ACT for Youth, 80 percent of independent youth in upstate New York reported having stayed “somewhere not intended for human habitation”. ACT is sponsored by the New York State Department of Health, SOS by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Both belong to the Oswego County Opportunities Youth Service Division.

The National Coalition for the Homeless welcomes such creative actions, and hopes to see more in the future.

### **NCH Welcomes Tony Taylor and Whitney Walton**

We are pleased to announce the addition of two new members to the NCH team.

Tony, originally from Nashville, Tennessee, is a senior psychology major at American University, where he designed a research study focusing on the childhood family experiences of people experiencing homelessness. He came to intern at NCH out of interest the organization's “broader sense” of poverty issues, illustrated by its commitment “to make great change through influencing police and changing peoples' perception of poverty”. Tony hopes to see passage of HR-2216, which would protect people experiencing homelessness against hate crimes, and to make a lasting contribution to the movement to end homelessness.

Whitney will be replacing Jonathan Bell as Development Associate as part of the AmeriCorps VISTA program. Hailing from Columbus, Ohio, Whitney attended Bowling Green University, where she graduated with a B.A. in Ethnic Studies and served as Community Service Chair for the Black Students Union (BSU) and Political Action Chair for both the BSU and the LGBT group Vision. Whitney wants to learn more about the problem homelessness and work to actively improve the lives of those affected by it. Eventually, she would like to obtain a Master's Degree in Public Service and start her own nonprofit organization.

Both Tony and Whitney are great assets to NCH, and we hope we can help as much with the realization of their goals as they undoubtedly will help us with ours.

### **Upcoming Speaking Engagements**

#### **Where to Catch NCH's Faces of Homelessness Speakers Bureau**

August 21<sup>st</sup> Georgetown University

August 21<sup>st</sup> Church of the Pilgrims

August 26<sup>th</sup> Washington and Lee University

August 28<sup>th</sup> George Washington University

September 3<sup>rd</sup> Northeastern University in Boston, MA

September 11<sup>th</sup> Youth Services Opportunities Project

### **Now Available: Homeless isn't Hopeless**

**COMING SOON!**

Proceeds from the sale of this book will be used to help homeless individuals and families attain lives of independence, dignity and self-sufficiency.

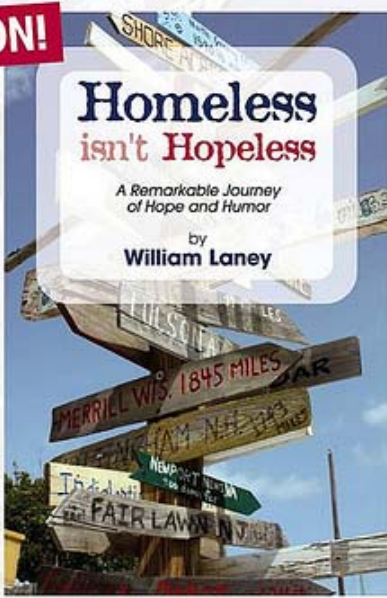
**"HOMELESS ISN'T HOPELESS" is great! It is well-written, factual, right on the mark, and it tells great stories.**  
— Dr. Michael Stoops, Executive Director of the National Coalition for the Homeless

**"An amazingly readable foray into the unthinkable... a must read book!"**  
— Alyson Motley-Crean, Key West Bureau Chief of the Florida Keys Keynote


**"Homelessness is a devastating experience that disrupts every aspect of one's life. Laney demonstrates that one's will and positive attitude are our greatest resource when facing any of life's challenges."**  
— Rev. Stephen E. Braddock, Ph.D., President & CEO, Florida Keys Outreach Coalition for the Homeless

**"Reveals the threads of our common humanity."**  
— JT Thompson, Founder, One Human Family Foundation

**Homeless isn't Hopeless**  
A Remarkable Journey of Hope and Humor  
by  
**William Laney**



To reserve an advance copy of the book - or to be notified where it will be available, call **1-800-528-6595** (M-F, 9-5) or contact:  
**LaneyPublications@gmail.com**



Author William Laney editing and proofing his remarkable journal of being homeless in America.

## My Vote This November

By Mike Jones, NCH Intern

Originally Featured in *Network Connection*

This election year is special because this will be my first time voting. It has also been exciting because we had the first African-American man running against the first woman for the Democratic presidential nomination. It was such a tough campaign that I could not decide whom I wanted to vote for, so I did not vote in the primary.

I became homeless at age 11 when my parents divorced. After the divorce, my mom couldn't afford to keep the house. From 13 to 16, I lived with my dad and started using pot, acid and finally methamphetamines. Bouncing in and out of school in Columbus, Indiana, I joined a gang and made many black friends. I wanted to get away from the drugs so I left my dad's and began living in my car. I still took pills and dropped out of school. Finally, I enrolled in adult education classes and finished school on time. I feel like my experience is neither white middle class nor traditional. I've always related more to marginalized people like many in the black community.

After graduating, I started working in a factory and didn't plan on going to college until an old friend convinced me to apply. Throughout college, I've slept in dorms, lounges and in the library after hours. Once, the school found out I was staying in the dorm and tried to charge me for a month's rent.

This spring break, I came on a mission trip to Washington D.C. where I visited CCNV, the nation's largest homeless shelter. There I saw the hypothermia room where they put sick people pulled off the street. I thought I had it bad, but these people were worse off than me.

I met Michael Stoops who asked me to intern with the National Coalition for the Homeless, and I took the Student Homeless Challenge, which asks students and public officials to sleep on the streets for 48 hours. I think the experience helps people appreciate the things they take for granted like a bathroom and privacy, and provides much insight, but does not allow one to truly experience homelessness because participants can always go back to their privileges.

Through the Coalition, I speak to high school and college students across the country about my experiences to dispel the myths and stereotypes about homelessness. Their jaws drop when Michael introduces me, a 21-year-old white male. I hope that my speeches breed compassion so people take action. People have individual responsibility, but government has a role to play and everyone should be willing to help through taxes and private charity. This affects all of us because anyone could end up homeless. We are all humans, and should be treated like it. We urge audiences to acknowledge people's humanity when they meet them on the street, to write letters, and most importantly to vote.

This election is having a tremendous effect on me because I never thought I would actually vote. I believed that one voice would never make a difference. But working at the National Coalition for the Homeless made me realize that we can make our voices heard together. It makes a difference who is in office. I don't know much about politics, but I know that we need more people voting to ensure that our government is truly of, by, and for the people. We need politicians who empathize with and relate to the experience of poverty. So I encourage everyone to vote and to write to their public officials and ask them to take the NCH's Homeless Challenge so they stop pushing homeless people out of sight and out of mind.

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