Greater Macon Sleepout Raises $70,000

Depaul USA’s Daybreak in Macon, GA, held its signature fundraiser – The Greater Macon Sleepout – on February 25, 2016. The event brought in $70,000 to support its programs. This was the third Sleepout. It has grown in support and turnout since the first one was held in 2014. The event is modeled on a “CEO Sleepout” that takes place in Australia. The fundraiser was open to both CEOs and the community-at-large. The concept is simple: pledge $1,000 to sleep overnight in the park.

While the event attracted large corporate donors such as GEICO and Georgia Power, it also allowed teams from churches and/or local college groups to participate, even those who could not quite meet the $1,000 commitment. The experience resulted not only in helping Depaul USA raise critical funds, but also in conversations that helped people in the community reframe their views of homelessness. The event was successful thanks in large part to Chuck Leavell, celebrity spokesperson and longtime keyboardist for the Rolling Stones. Daybreak supporter, Jeff Battcher, was also instrumental for the increased support, as he organized extensive media coverage leading up to the event.

A Zone of Peace

The Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia has named Depaul USA’s Philadelphia programs a “Zone of Peace”. Zones of Peace is an initiative of the Religious Leaders Council of Greater Philadelphia which has issued a Call to People of Faith to Stop Violence, urging all to make neighborhoods “free from fear, filled with respect, and marked by deeds of kindness.”

Depaul USA celebrated this accomplishment with a presentation at Depaul House on May 5, 2016. Depaul USA President/Executive Director, Charles Levesque, accepted a Zones of Peace banner from Rev. John B. Hougen of The Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia.

As part of the nominations process, a steering committee interviewed staff and several Depaul stakeholders. After the interviews, committee members commented, “Depaul USA in Philadelphia is truly meeting the unmet needs in the homeless population of our city, creating a culture of dignity and love, and contributing to positive models of systemic change.”

Rev. Hougen stated that the steering committee was impressed with Depaul USA’s exemplary efforts to address the root causes of violence through service to persons who are homeless and subjected to violence in many forms. “Depaul USA does the hard work of responding holistically, professionally, and compassionately to the complex issues that contribute to and accompany homelessness, and does so while respecting the dignity of all persons, and communicating peace, joy, and hope.” The steering committee also acknowledged that Depaul USA embodies the values of St. Vincent de Paul, realizing the potential for cooperation among persons of diverse backgrounds, religious traditions, and circumstances.
A New Program Cleans Up in Philly

Depaul House in Philadelphia recently launched its newest initiative, Transitional Jobs Project (TJP). The program lifts participants out of homelessness by connecting them to employment. TJP was developed to help residents by providing them with recent work histories, small stipends, and practice with colleagues on accomplishing tasks. TJP participants clean commercial corridors and perform basic maintenance. The TJP crew currently works out of the Nicetown Community Development Corporation and Awbury Arboretum in Northwest Philadelphia. While all residents at Depaul House work with case management and employment readiness staff to update their resumes, practice interview skills and apply for jobs online and in-person, data show that a percentage of residents remain unemployed for at least six months after moving to Depaul. Many Depaul House residents also have long histories of unemployment and lack critical “soft” skills. The Transitional Jobs Project is designed to fill these gaps.

One Germantown Avenue resident remarked, “The TJP team really made a difference by helping keep the block clean.” Wiley Redding, the Work Readiness Trainer, reports that crew members help each other and offer one another encouragement in daily team meetings. Project participants receive stipends for up to three months. Participants also receive a certificate of completion, a reference letter which details their strengths, and referrals to local training programs. To date, all participants have superb attendance records and are on track to complete the project in May 2016.

At Home

Dear Friends,

Before turning out the lights at the end of the day, I have been listening to Pearl Jam’s “Wishlist”. Of the many beguiling items on that musical wish list, one stanza particularly stands out: “I wish I was a messenger and all the news was good.”

Reviewing the articles for this newsletter, I realized this wish had actually come true for me. In this edition of Homeward, you will learn about a successful Sleepout in Macon, a new program in New Orleans that takes folks from the streets and places them in housing, and how Depaul USA is helping more university students in Chicago stay in school. You will meet Rosina whose health has improved since coming to St. Raymond’s House and help us celebrate one year of services in Little Rock. All very good news.

This is not to suggest that things are always cheery at Depaul USA. We face programming and financing challenges common to all non-profits. What is certain, however, is that the work we do with your help is a force for good.

As always, my sincerest thanks for all your support.

Charles W. Levesque
President/Executive Director

info@depaulusa.org                    Depaul USA                    @DepaulUSA
Rosina Glickman Finds Refuge in St. Raymond’s House

Last summer, Rosina Glickman was in a coma and fighting for her life. For the past decade, she has been on her own. Her husband had divorced her and their adult daughters refuse to speak to her as well. Rosina attributes her family breakup to her addiction to prescription pain medication. She became homeless and her health began to deteriorate after the breakup of her family.

Rosina was diagnosed with COPD, hypertension, and emphysema. To add insult to injury, she experienced a heart attack which left her in a coma and on a ventilator for 3 ½ months. When significant time passed, Rosina was taken off of the ventilator. Physicians did not expect her to survive. Her case manager, who prayed with her, was one of very few visitors during this time. Remarkably, Rosina survived. When Rosina tells the story of her recovery, tears shine in her eyes and she says, “I can’t help it. The doctors said that I was a true example of a miracle!”

Rosina continues to make remarkable progress in many aspects. She moved into St. Raymond’s House, a permanent supportive housing program in Philadelphia in January 2016. Tamara Coleman, her case worker, has helped her address several issues including improving her self-esteem and teaching her how to build a healthy financial future. Rosina is also really excited about connecting with others through her newly acquired Facebook account.

Rosina says that at St. Raymond’s House she has finally found a home and a sense of family after many years on the streets alone. “Everyone here is trying to help. No matter when I need them, they are always willing to help or talk,” she says. On Easter, Rosina bought cupcakes for everyone who lives and works at St. Raymond’s House. When asked why, she says, “I’m grateful to be alive and to be here. I wanted to share that with everyone.”

Daybreak Names Loxlan Bueford Essay Contest Winner

Daybreak in Macon recently hosted an essay contest open to program participants. Congratulations to Loxlan Bueford for his winning entry.

“Daybreak – A Part of Loxlan Bueford”

Daybreak appeared in the life of Loxlan Bueford upon his hearing about the daytime homeless center. For the last four years, Loxlan and Daybreak have grown together. Today, Loxlan sees his relationship to Daybreak as being inseparable.

Sometime in the year 2012, Loxlan passed by the present Daybreak structure in the process of being completed on his way to Central City Park. Seeing people stand about, he inquired as to what was going on. Hearing of Daybreak’s free services, Loxlan became a regular, as he began to volunteer in the café. Upon the progression of his mother’s illness, Loxlan left volunteering and cared for her. Meanwhile, Loxlan still frequented Daybreak, where he met his “significant other.” Loxlan looks forward to the free services that the Daybreak staff and volunteers so graciously provide, especially the coffee, breakfast, and occasional flu shot and Tylenol. Most of all, Daybreak stands for a place he calls home. In his own words, “My family home.” When Loxlan goes through hard times, Daybreak offers friendship without fail. Daybreak is a place for him to hang-out and talk to others like himself, who accept him. Daybreak’s staff smiles and calls him by name, which boosts his confidence.

If Daybreak were to ever shut down, Loxlan would be at a great loss. He would be sad and broken-hearted, because every day the first thing he says to his significant other is, “I’m going to Daybreak.”

—by Loxlan Bueford

Support individuals facing homelessness in your community.

Donate at www.depaulusa.org Depaul USA is a registered 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization.
In an effort to help create safe and affordable housing where people can have a place to call home and a stake in their community, Depaul’s newest social enterprise is Depaul USA Realty. The initiative creates affordable and attractive housing in the communities of St. Louis. The building has an occupancy of twelve units, ten of which are fully occupied. The remaining two apartments will be occupied by the end of May 2016.

In March 2016, Depaul USA celebrated one year since it assumed management of the Jericho Way day/resource center. Jericho Way provides homeless men and women with intensive case management, connections to resources, opportunities to learn new skills, a place to feel safe & comfortable, and showers & laundry services so that participants can build more stable and independent lives.

Over the past year, Depaul USA has remodeled and redecorated Jericho Way, developed more programs, created a computer lab, hired more case workers, and reached out to foundations and faith communities for funding. More than a thousand individuals came to Jericho Way to receive services. Depaul USA thanks the cities of Little Rock and North Little Rock and its local supporters for their continued assistance. Depaul USA hopes to begin developing housing units in Little Rock in the coming year.

Depaul USA’s first year in Little Rock has been one of significant accomplishments.

• 773 people fulfilled personal goals through encounters with case managers.
• 20 men and women have been successfully housed.
• 47 people gained or increased their income.
• 164 people received help replacing either lost or stolen identity documents.
• 226 people took steps to improve their living situations; moving from being unsheltered into shelters, transitional housing or permanent supportive housing.
• Depaul USA served over 20,000 meals.

In October 2015, Depaul USA launched its second housing program in New Orleans. “Coming Home” is a permanent supportive housing program for eleven chronically homeless individuals. The program uses a “Housing First” approach. Assistance is offered without requiring treatment or medication compliance and housing assistance is accessible despite challenging behavioral issues. All clients were originally homeless. Individuals participating in “Coming Home” were living on the streets, in shelters, and/or abandoned buildings for over a year. Now they live in scattered site units throughout Orleans and Jefferson parishes.

Depaul USA staff provides in-home case management to clients, develops service plans, and encourages clients to meet personal goals. Since inception, all eleven clients have seen a primary care physician, had mental health evaluations, and have been connected with other social service organizations. Four clients have received Supplemental Security Income, three others are awaiting confirmation on their Supplemental Security Income cases, and one is working part-time.
Depaul USA is proud to announce that the Barra Foundation has selected Depaul's Philadelphia programs for its prestigious “Barra Foundation Award”. The award recognizes outstanding leadership, performance and adaptability on the part of Philadelphia area nonprofits and comes with a $50,000 grant over two years. The generous cash award is unrestricted. Just 40 organizations representing arts, cultural, educational and health & human services organizations in the Philadelphia region received the 2016-2017 award.

Upon receiving notification of the award, Charles Levesque, Depaul USA President/Executive Director stated, “Depaul USA is deeply grateful to the Barra Foundation for this honor. I am personally grateful to our Philadelphia staff. Depaul USA would not have received the award without their hard and excellent work. I am extremely proud of the difference Depaul USA is making in Philadelphia.”

Music at Daybreak

One of Depaul USA’s more creative community partners is the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings at Mercer University in Macon, GA. World-renowned classical violinist and hometown hero Robert McDuffie is the founder of this prestigious strings program. McDuffie has often expressed his passionate belief in music’s ability to console people and heal community wounds, as well as build bridges between individuals. Throughout the school year, his students have modeled that belief by volunteering their time to perform at Daybreak. With the entire community invited to attend, this outreach culminated on April 28, 2016, with an outdoor spring strings concert under the pavilion at Daybreak. Daybreak looks forward to hosting the community as they experience together these gifts of music.

Support individuals facing homelessness in your community.
Donate at www.depaulusa.org  Depaul USA is a registered 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization.
Scenes from the Sleepout

The Great Room at Daybreak was filled with over 100 people ready to spend the night in the park or to lend their encouragement and support to the sleepers.

Before sleeping in the park, everyone gathered together to share a simple meal of savory soups and bread provided by Navicent Health. They heard firsthand from a participant at Daybreak how his own journey had included struggles with healthcare, transportation, and personal safety. Several Daybreak participants ate their meals and mingled comfortably with the sleepers. Temperatures promised to dip down into the thirties. That night, people who would normally be sleeping outside slept inside the warm, safe embrace of Daybreak.

Forty or so tents stood glowing in Central City Park, lit by the light of four scattered campfires that were built by Macon-Bibb County Parks and Recreation. Approximately sixty people, all sleepers, began to gather together around different sites: the Navicent Choir sang at one site, an accordion and guitar and single voice or two blended at another, a group of quiet people had a deeply meditative moment at a third. The sense of camaraderie was strong, and the words of President/Executive Director, Charles Levesque remained in each person’s mind: This was a night for us to show solidarity with people who live homeless. This was a night to show that people will stand together with compassion and understanding. This was a night for building bridges.

After a long night, people arose in the late-winter morning, collected their gear, and made their way to Daybreak. Inside was light, warmth, the smell of coffee, the friendliness of waiting volunteers, and the promise of a shower and a meal. These simple things combined to create a simple and blessed welcome. Together, a community sat down to eat chicken biscuits and cheese grits. They warmed their hands around mugs of coffee. Small groups ate together and discussed their night, whether or not they had slept, whether or not they had been warm.

Two months later, after final donations rolled in, it was announced that the Sleepout had raised $70,000. For some people, this was enough to call the fundraiser a success. For others, however, the greater measure was in what happened at dinner, around those campfires, and at breakfast, when the philosophies of Depaul USA were evident in how people interacted with each other with greater compassion and understanding.

Planned Giving

There are many ways to make a difference in the lives of people who are homeless. Depaul USA encourages donors to meet their personal and philanthropic goals through a planned gift. There are many options to consider, which are strategically planned to be as convenient as possible.

Will/Estate Planning
Donors can make Depaul USA, and its fight to end homelessness, a part of their family through the generosity of wills, estates or trusts.

IRA
IRAs can be put to work while avoiding income tax on retirement plan assets through an IRA gift.

Donor Advised Fund
Supporters can make an outright gift through Donor Advised Funds or by simply adding Depaul USA as the ultimate beneficiary.

There are several ways to make a legacy gift to Depaul USA. For more information, please call Jim Hutson today at (312) 362-8873 or e-mail him at james.hutson@depaulusa.org.

– by Gaye Martel, Daybreak Volunteer Coordinator
Depaul USA’s Expansion & Growth

Depaul USA is expanding and growing, eleven new staff members have recently joined.

**CHICAGO (HEADQUARTERS)**

**Candace Anderson** is the Director of Operations. She is responsible for human resources, organizational policies and procedures, onboarding staff, and performance assessments. Candace also manages the organization’s website, social media platforms, and traditional communications such as the newsletter and email. Candace holds a Master of Arts in Leadership & Organizational Development and a Bachelor of Arts in Nonprofit Management from DePaul University.

**James (Jim) Hutson** is the Director of Individual Gifts & Events. He works closely with the President/Executive Director, Board of Directors, and senior management team to create and implement individual giving and fundraising events. He holds a Master of Arts in Sociology from Ball State University; and a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice & Sociology from Anderson University.

**Tony Romero** is an intern in the finance office. His responsibilities include filing, data entry for account payables, and performing accounting entries for Depaul USA Thrift, LLC and Depaul USA Realty, LLC. Tony holds an Associate Degree in Business Administration and is currently studying Accounting at DePaul University.

**LITTLE ROCK**

**LaTissle (Tish) Cummings** is a case manager. One of her primary focuses is to help clients transition from homelessness to permanent housing. She holds a Master of Arts in Counseling from Letourneau University and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Louisiana State University.

**Janet Nelson** is the Executive Assistant at Jericho Way. Her responsibilities include assisting the Program Director with the day-to-day operations and administration of the office. Janet holds a Master of Arts degree in Psychology from Southern Illinois University, a Graduate Certificate in Gerontology, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Southern Illinois University in Psychology.

**Jeremy Rucker** is a security guard at Jericho Way. He safeguards all of the visitors, staff and participants. He studied Mass Communications at the University of Central Arkansas.

**NEW ORLEANS**

**Andrew Brasher** is a case manager for Coming Home, the permanent supportive housing program. Andrew develops client service plans, links participants with mental and physical healthcare providers and connects them to other social services. Andrew holds a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and Sociology from Knox College.

**PHILADELPHIA**

**Tamara Coleman** is a program counselor at St. Raymond’s House. She delivers individualized counseling to residents of the program with an emphasis on allowing participants to focus on their recovery. Tamara has a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration from the University of Phoenix.

**Alexandra Demuth** is an on-call resident and intern aide at St. Raymond’s House. She performs clerical and administrative duties. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Services from Chestnut Hill College and is currently enrolled at Bryn Mawr College seeking a Master of Social Work degree.

**Rodnayta Dunn** is a cook at St. Raymond’s House and Depaul House. St. Raymond’s House serves 27 chronically homeless women and men with medical conditions. Depaul House provides transitional housing for 27 men. Rodnatya is responsible for providing nutritious, healthy, and delicious meals to residents of both programs. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Cheyney University.

**Harold Evans** is a counselor at St. Raymond’s House. He provides client-centered, trauma-informed, strength-based, recovery-oriented, and holistic case management while using a harm-reduction model. He holds a Doctorate of Ministry in Pastoral Care from Lutheran Theological Seminary, a Master of Social Work from the University of Michigan, a Master of Divinity from Lutheran Theological Seminary, and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Welfare from Livingstone College.
Depaul USA clients are Homeward bound! Read more about it . . .