

# GOING HOME

## Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance

May 2009

Strength  
Dignity  
Hope

Compassion  
Accountability  
Respect &  
Courage

Photograph courtesy of Lynn Blodgett

## Home at Last

Robert Jackson still remembers being startled awake on the street that day to find a man standing over him with an axe who said, “You see how easy you would be to kill?”

Yet even with the danger and drugs of living on the Dallas streets, it was not an easy decision for Robert to come to

The Bridge for help. He says, “I was out in the streets of West Dallas “druggin” and met the city’s crisis

team. A guy named Norris told me they could help me at The Bridge, so I decided to give it a try.”

Located south of downtown Dallas, The Bridge is a combination emergency shelter and transitional housing program. In a single location it provides a

continuum of care for the homeless and disadvantaged in Dallas, from meeting

immediate needs like meals, showers, and hospital care, to finding permanent housing, employment, and health care solutions.

Before Robert spent his nine years on the streets, he had a family, a home, and two jobs. But when his  
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## Home at Last

(continued)

wife left him and his mother died in the same year, Robert fell into a deep depression and just stopped caring. “That was my life, but I had to turn my back on all that when I came to The Bridge.”

Since it opened just a year ago, The Bridge has found jobs for more than 700 homeless men and women. It has placed 425 into permanent housing and provided over 90,000 overnight stays.

Robert is one of those recently placed into a new apartment, which he keeps neat and tidy, saying, “I really like it over here.” He spends his days visiting with neighbors, attending recovery meetings, and



reconnecting with his family he hadn't seen in years.

Robert also encourages his street friends to come to The Bridge. “There is help at The Bridge,” he tells them. “You just have to want it.”

*Thank you for helping impact the lives of people like Robert. You truly make a difference. In such a short period of time much has been accomplished because of your care.*

## Signs of Success

The Bridge's unique, multi-service campus provides a continuum of care — including housing, emergency and transitional care — for people experiencing long-term homelessness.

Because of stories like Robert's, and there are many, we know The Bridge is working. And there are other signs of success as well:

**628,812** meals served

**136,194** stays in emergency shelters

**25,661** stays in transitional shelters

**783** job placements

**425** placed in permanent housing

**\$2.7 million** savings to Dallas County.

As a direct result of The Bridge's success, the City of Dallas has seen a 25% decrease in crime downtown and 800 fewer jail stays, saving taxpayers more than \$2.7 million. What's more, there's been a three-fold reduction in the hospital costs associated with mental health issues.

## Remembering Cindy Honey

Those who never had the chance to meet Cindy Honey in person may wonder about the sign “Cindy's Park,” dedicating the courtyard space at The Bridge to her memory.

Cindy was the first paid staff member of Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance (MDHA) and served as its Executive Director.

But more, she was a tireless advocate for the homeless. It is because of her vision, leadership, and determination that The Bridge exists today, along with the many features and services it offers to those who need it.

To make an online donation to the Cindy Honey Memorial Fund, please visit: <http://www.mdhadallas.org/cindy>.



# Finding Hope, and Giving it Away

Charlotte is one of many homeless people in Dallas who are discovering that The Bridge can lead them to a better way of life.

As the “baby” in a family with three older brothers, Charlotte was raised by her widowed mother with whom she was always close. Charlotte says her world collapsed when her mother died three years ago. “I just lost myself,” Charlotte says of that time in her life, when she began living “on the street” intermittently and falling into addictions to cope with the challenges of homelessness.

In September, a friend brought Charlotte in to The Bridge. She was quite confused at first, but stayed in the Emergency Housing program

because she felt safe. Gradually, Charlotte gained the confidence to speak with Melissa, a Care Manager, who encouraged Charlotte that she could make a life on her own.

Today Charlotte is well on her way to that independence. She works in facilities management at The Bridge on weekends, thoroughly enjoys her work, and hopes to become a full-time employee.

Charlotte says, “The more encouragement I receive from The Bridge staff, the more I feel capable of doing.” And to her credit, the more Charlotte accomplishes, the more she offers her encouragement

to other guests, giving them the hope that they can change their lives, too.



*Thank you for the encouragement and hope you are giving to people like Charlotte. Without your support, their stories would not be possible.*

## The View from Next Door

Millet The Printer has been a family-owned business in downtown Dallas since 1933 and at its current location since 1967. For years the printing company endured vandalism, vagrancy, and other problems associated with homelessness, forcing it to install security systems and fences to protect its property and employees.

Last year the printer got a new neighbor when The Bridge center was built on the adjacent property. Owner Dan Millet is pleased with the improvement to the neighborhood. “As the next door neighbor of The Bridge, I can say first-hand that nothing but positive changes have taken place since their arrival. They greatly help in keeping the area tidy, and there are fewer persons on the streets with no place to go.”



# A Note from Our President

Dear Citizens of Metropolitan Dallas:

All of us in the Dallas area should be pleased with the positive effect The Bridge is having in our community, as the number of homeless persons counted in Dallas decreased from 5,869 in 2008 to 5,675 in 2009.



A reliable supply of permanent housing is critical to breaking the cycle of chronic homelessness. Permanent supportive housing isn't simply a place to live; it provides services that allow those with disabling conditions to live independently and participate in community life. We consistently see that the more permanent supportive housing units we develop in Dallas, the fewer chronically homeless individuals we count.

As a community we need to support and welcome the addition of new housing with services for our citizens who need our support the most. Please open your arms to those in need, and let your city council and neighborhood associations know you welcome supportive housing and the benefits it provides to everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Michael M. Faenza".

Michael M. Faenza  
President & CEO  
Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance



The MDHA is a 501(c)(3) member organization composed of a broad spectrum of stakeholders committed to end homelessness. Through MDHA, 86 agencies that represent shelters, hospitals, government agencies, local municipalities, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, housing and treatment providers, individuals (including homeless consumers), businesses, medical/educational leaders, and other community members meet routinely to collaborate on issues to fight homelessness. The mission is to end homelessness in Metropolitan Dallas through advocacy, planning, and education that creates and sustains needed change.

**Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance** (located at The Bridge)  
1818 Corsicana, Dallas Texas 75201 • 214-670-1100  
Email: [Info@MDHADallas.org](mailto:Info@MDHADallas.org) • Website: [www.mdhadallas.org](http://www.mdhadallas.org)

## Ways You Can Help

There are many ways you can join MDHA and help end homelessness by donating your time, talents, and treasures.

### Volunteer:

Our diverse volunteers include professionals, retirees, civic club members, church groups, youth groups, and corporate volunteers. By volunteering, you help bring love, concern, hope and friendship to our community.

To get involved, contact Alonzo Peterson at 214-670-1127, or [APeterson@MDHADallas.org](mailto:APeterson@MDHADallas.org).

### Donate:

Through the generous support of our donors, we hope to end Chronic Homelessness by 2014. We welcome all levels of donation, whether it's a one-time gift, a monthly donation, or an item you would like to provide or make possible from our Wish List.

### Immediate Needs:

**Adult's summer clothing kit** (pair of shorts, shirt, underwear, socks, sneakers): \$28

**Basic toiletries supply kit** for one person: \$3.25

**Child's summer clothing kit** (pair of shorts, shirt, underwear, socks, sneakers): \$22

**A day's meals for family of three:** \$22

**One towel and wash cloth:** \$3.50

**Apartment kitchen starter kit** (utensils, pots, pans, storage containers): \$45

**Furniture for a one bedroom apartment:** \$400

**Two bedroom apartment:** \$650

To make an online donation to Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance, please visit our website at: <http://www.mdhadallas.org/donate>.

For a full list of needs on our "Wish List," please go to <http://www.mdhadallas.org/wishlist>. To donate any of these items, contact Erin McFaye at: 214-670-1100, or [emcfaye@mdhadallas.org](mailto:emcfaye@mdhadallas.org).