

Volunteer & Donation Guide



Bethesda Project

*A Caring Family for
Philadelphia's Homeless*

Contact:
Community Life
(215) 236 - 7850
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www.bethesdaproject.org

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“Every day I have to continue working on myself... I was losing all the time, and today I’m on the winning side. I never thought I’d get off drugs, but now I’m so free.”

-Kelly
Current resident

ABOUT BETHESDA PROJECT

The mission of Bethesda Project is to find and care for the abandoned poor and to be family with those who have none.

Since its inception in 1979, Bethesda Project has created caring communities for homeless and formerly homeless adults in Philadelphia. Bethesda Project is focused on reaching out to those who are not only homeless, but severely isolated from society, typically stemming from untreated chronic mental illness, medical conditions and addiction. Many of these men and women come to Bethesda Project after years of living on the streets, and are extremely reluctant to stay in any type of shelter. Supporting these vulnerable men and women requires long-term relationship building to address the underlying health and personal issues causing homelessness.

What makes Bethesda Project unique is the dedication of the staff to treat these individuals as family and work through challenges to ensure that these men and women have a place to call home. This patient and persistent approach has proven to be very successful.

The Problem & Our Impact

- ◆ Philadelphia has the worst poverty rate of the ten largest cities in the U.S.
- ◆ The Philadelphia Housing Authority has over 100,000 individuals and families on its waiting list for affordable housing.
- ◆ Bethesda Project operates 13 locations in Philadelphia, serving over 2,000 homeless and formerly homeless men and women each year.
- ◆ Services include emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing, case management services and community activities to help each individual reach his or her highest level of self-sufficiency.
- ◆ Bethesda Project coordinates over 14,000 hours of volunteer service each year. Volunteers are an important part of building mutually rewarding friendships with our guests and residents.
- ◆ Of Bethesda Project resident and guest populations: 65% have serious medical conditions including HIV-AIDS, cancer, high blood pressure, and diabetes; 60% have diagnoses of mental illness; 45% have histories of addiction; 31% are age 60 or older; 30% are dually diagnosed with mental health issues and histories of addiction.
- ◆ Bethesda Project facilitates over 200 positive moves to more independent housing each year.

“The people of Bethesda Project saw value and potential in me that I didn’t see in myself. I felt worthless... It changed everything. When you get to Bethesda Project, they don’t care what you look like... There’s no judgment, only support.”

*- Bill
Former resident*

HANDS-ON VOLUNTEERISM

There are many great ways to make a direct impact in the lives of residents and guests at our shelters and housing sites. Below is a list of popular volunteer projects. For a full list of current opportunities, visit the volunteer section of our website:

www.bethesdaproject.org/get-involved

Serve A Meal

A great way to get to know the men and women of Bethesda Project is preparing and serving meals. Just like your home, our sites and kitchens range in capacity and size, but we are happy to work to accommodate volunteer groups of all sizes. We are always looking for individuals and groups to bring the food that they serve, although assisting with the preparation of food we have available is also an option.

Help Maintain Our Sites

As we strive to welcome the most vulnerable men and women in Philadelphia into our caring family, our sites require additional housekeeping and maintenance support from our dedicated volunteers in order to operate at our highest capacity. Individuals and group volunteers regularly assist with light housekeeping duties including laundry, sweeping, cleaning kitchens, as well as deep cleaning days scrubbing tiles, cleaning behind furniture, gardening projects, and much more.

Host A Game Day

Not all volunteer projects involve manual labor. In our mission to help chronically homeless men and women recover from the isolation of living on the streets, we rely on volunteers to bring a sense of family and community to our shelters and permanent supportive housing sites. Many volunteers find that organizing a game day is a great way to get involved. Volunteers bring and play a variety of games and activities at our sites including bingo, cards, karaoke, board games, and more.

Lead An Art Class

Art provides a means for many people to explore feelings, reconcile emotional conflicts, manage behavior and addiction, develop social skills, reduce anxiety, and increase self-esteem. From creative writing classes to collages, we rely on volunteers to use art to help our guest and residents recover from the trauma of life on the streets. Bethesda Project's resources are limited, so we rely on our art volunteers to provide supplies for their projects.





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HOW YOU CAN HELP...

DONATE SUPPLIES

Bethesda Project opens its doors to chronically homeless men and women who are resistant to enter the shelter system. In addition to the men and women who sleep in Bethesda Project shelters and residences each night, many more connect with Bethesda Project during the day to meet their basic needs for food, clothing, toiletries and other essentials. Donating supplies to Bethesda Project is a great way to support individuals in the early stages of recovering from homelessness.

High demand items:

- ◆ Towels
- ◆ New twin-sized bed sheets
- ◆ Toothbrushes
- ◆ Toothpaste
- ◆ Gift cards to Wawa, Walgreens, Dunkin Donuts, CVS (from \$5–\$25)
- ◆ Sweaters (all sizes)
- ◆ SEPTA tokens
- ◆ Wallets
- ◆ Soap
- ◆ Razors
- ◆ Shaving cream
- ◆ Shampoo
- ◆ New, unopened men's underwear (all sizes)
- ◆ Men's winter coats and jackets (all sizes)
- ◆ Winter hats
- ◆ Socks (all sizes)
- ◆ Men's boots (all sizes)

Please deliver all donations to:

Community Life
Our Brothers' Place
907 Hamilton St.
Philadelphia, PA 19123
(Near 10th & Spring Garden)



Many of our guests carry important documents (birth certificates, social security cards) in makeshift wallets. Donating new wallets is a great way to help!

We are unable to accept the following items:

- ◆ Used linens
- ◆ Used underwear
- ◆ Used socks
- ◆ Already opened food, including leftovers from large group gatherings (due to USDA regulations)
- ◆ Women's clothing
- ◆ Furniture of any kind

Prior notice of the date and time of your delivery is very helpful.

Donations are welcome anytime, but are most easily accepted Monday – Saturday 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.

For questions, please contact communitylife@bethesdaproject.org or call (215) 236–7850.

Please note that we are unable to pick up donations.

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

DONATE WELCOME KITS

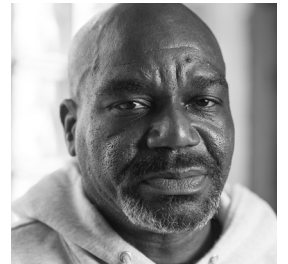
Welcome Kit Contents:

- ◆ Waterproof picnic blanket
- ◆ Twin sheets
- ◆ Shampoo
- ◆ Soap
- ◆ Toothbrush
- ◆ Toothpaste
- ◆ Razors
- ◆ Shaving cream
- ◆ Men's warm socks (all sizes)
- ◆ Men's gloves (all sizes)
- ◆ Men's winter hats (all sizes)
- ◆ Men's underwear (all sizes)
- ◆ A note of encouragement from you (optional)
- ◆ Please package your items in a mesh laundry bag and label the size of items contained in the Welcome Kit.

This will ensure guests at our winter shelters also have a convenient way to transport their laundry to the laundry facility at our largest emergency shelter.

Each winter, Philadelphia's most vulnerable and chronically homeless men and women come to Bethesda Project seeking shelter. These individuals often avoid the shelter system in the warmer months, many times due to untreated mental illness, histories of substance abuse, and past traumas. You can help welcome these vulnerable men and women into our caring communities by making and donating welcome kits.

Welcome kits contain the supplies needed for individuals coming into shelter for the first time after months, if not years, of living on the streets. We collect welcome kits all year long in preparation for the high demand for services we experience through winter.



Please deliver welcome kits to: Community Life
Our Brothers' Place
907 Hamilton St.
Philadelphia, PA 19123





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Project**

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HOW YOU CAN HELP...

DONATE FOOD

Join Our Casserole Network

Many volunteers enjoy preparing, freezing, and delivering casseroles to one or more of our sites. Casseroles are used at least three times a month at each housing site for group gatherings, house celebrations, birthday parties and more. The experience the casseroles provide is an essential part of building community through family meals.

We have a few special requests regarding the preparation of casseroles:

- ◆ It is important to follow the USDA Food Safety Guidelines found online at:

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>

- ◆ Please label the casseroles, noting:
 1. Source (name of sponsoring organization or family name)
 2. Date of preparation
 3. Name of casserole dish
 4. Main ingredients
- ◆ Use 18" x 12" disposable aluminum pans
- ◆ Please **do not** include pork products, due to the dietary restrictions of many of our residents
- ◆ Deliver your casseroles to:

Bethesda Sanctuary

816 S. 20th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19146
(Near 20th and Christian)

- ◆ To schedule a weekday delivery, contact the Sanctuary Program Coordinator at (215) 545-6178.
- ◆ For evening and weekend deliveries, please call on a weekday (Mon-Fri, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.), to arrange the delivery time. The Program Coordinator can also explain where best to park to drop off your delivery.
- ◆ **Due to USDA regulations, we are unable to accept already opened food, including leftovers from large group gatherings.**

Questions? Contact: communitylife@bethesdaproject.org

SHOP & GIVE

Shop Online With Amazon Smile

Smile.amazon.com will donate 0.5% of each of your eligible everyday purchases to Bethesda Project.

- ◆ Learn more and set up your account at smile.amazon.com
- ◆ Encourage your friends and family to join and help us make a bigger impact together.

Donate Supplies Online

- ◆ Purchase bulk toiletries online from National Hospitality Supply: www.nathosp.com
 - ◆ Purchase items from Amazon Smile and ship them right to Bethesda Project!
- View an up-to-date list of needed items on our Amazon Wish List <http://amzn.com/w/1GXH7FRNOYFER>

Please ship all items to:

**Community Life
Our Brothers' Place
907 Hamilton St.
Philadelphia, PA 19123**

Make A Financial Gift

Supporting over 2,000 chronically homeless individuals each year would be impossible without the generous financial support of our volunteers and community partners. 85 cents of each donated dollar goes to direct program and services for those in need.

- ◆ Donate online at www.bethesdaproject.org
- ◆ Please consider becoming a monthly donor to create a lasting impact

Your Impact

\$10 provides a packet of tokens for residents to get to medical appointments and run errands

\$25 provides a guest or resident with a bedbug resistant mattress cover

\$50 provides three healthy meals for three days to one resident at My Brother's House

\$1,500 provides one month of heat to a Bethesda Project Permanent Supportive Housing site



ONLINE AND OFF-SITE OPPORTUNITIES

Bethesda Project was born through the love and care of volunteers. From the very beginning, we have relied on the kindness and generosity of volunteers to transform our houses into homes and to be family with those who have none. Volunteers prepare and serve meals, help clean and maintain our shelters and housing sites, and develop meaningful, supportive one-on-one relationships with our guests and residents. Following are a few great ways you and your community can help support our mission “to find and care for the abandoned poor and to be family with those who have none.”

Get Involved Online

We all hold the power to communicate the importance of ending homelessness for the thousands of vulnerable individuals struggling on the streets. **Individuals, groups, restaurants, retailers, offices, all can play an important part:**

- ◆ **Like** and follow Bethesda Project online on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. It sounds simple, but increasing our online presence makes a big impact.
- ◆ **Share** important statuses with your network. We use social media to help connect our needs with resources in the community. You never know when you might be that crucial link between a problem and a solution.
- ◆ **Post** information you think might help raise awareness of the work we are doing in Philadelphia.
- ◆ **Sign up** for our monthly newsletter to stay informed about what is going on at Bethesda Project.

www.bethesdaproject.org

Be A Champion of Philadelphia's Homeless

- ◆ Organize a donation drive at your workplace or in your community.
See page 5 for a list of useful items to collect.
- ◆ Coordinate with us to organize a fundraiser, happy hour, restaurant promotion, or other small event to benefit Bethesda Project.
- ◆ Advocate for the homeless. Please share the mission of Bethesda Project with your friends and family and encourage them to also connect with us online.



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THANK YOU!

Your support will make it possible for us to continue providing shelter and supportive services to thousands of vulnerable men and women each year in Philadelphia.



For more information please contact:
Community Life
communitylife@bethesdaproject.org
215-236-7850

www.bethesdaproject.org

 facebook.com/bethesdaproject

 twitter.com/Bethesda_proj

 youtube.com/bethesdaproject