

United Way Regional Commission on Homelessness Street to Home and Shelter to Home

What is Street to Home?

In 2007, the United Way Regional Commission on Homeless and its community partners convened the Outreach Collaboration Team consisting of organizations with experience in mental health and addiction. These organizations had a common goal: to end chronic homelessness in metropolitan Atlanta. Their strategy was and is to work with the most vulnerable and entrenched individuals living on the streets in downtown Atlanta, those who have been homeless for over one year.

In the Street to Home Program, the Outreach Collaboration Team goes out, sometimes before dawn, to places where homeless persons dwell: under bridges, in city parks, near railroad tracks, and other places. The team offers homeless persons and families housing in shared apartments, along with intensive case management and connections with any supportive services they may need.

What is Shelter to Home?

The enormous success of the Street to Home Program spurred the creation of a similar program, called the Shelter to Home Program. Shelter to Home follows the Street to Home model closely; the Outreach Collaboration Team moves homeless persons in this program from shelters into permanent housing, instead of from the streets.

Street to Home and Shelter to Home Successes

In the two years since the programs' inception, results have been most impressive. Almost 500 of the most vulnerable people in our community have participated in the program, receiving housing and supportive services, and 80% have achieved success (remaining in the program and/or graduating from it).

Media Recognition, Honors and Awards

The Regional Commission on Homelessness has successfully built unique, successful relationships with outside agencies that traditionally worked in isolation, such as the police, the business community, health service providers, and the courts. The collaboration's model, as well as the dedication and commitment of its members, have been recognized worldwide, resulting in media recognition as well as awards and honors.

Recent media recognition includes "From Homeless to Home," a video news clip shown worldwide on CNN, "Economy Hurts Fight Against Homelessness," a news clip on ABCNews.com, as well as numerous articles in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Creative Loafing, and other news outlets.

Recent honors and awards include the prestigious Magnolia Award for creative collaborative partnerships, given by the Department of Community Affairs, and the John W. Macy Award for outstanding, individual leadership in the fight to end homelessness, which Horace Sibley, chair of the Regional Commission on Homelessness, received from the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Members of the Outreach Collaboration Team

United Way Regional
Commission on
Homelessness

Traveler's Aid of
Metropolitan Atlanta

The 24/7 Gateway
Services Center

Business Improvement
District

St Joseph's Mercy
Care

Community Friendship,
Inc.

Recovery Consultants
of Atlanta, Inc.

Grady Health Systems

Covenant House
Georgia

Atlanta Harm
Reduction Center

Behavioral Health Link

Police HOPE Team

Downtown
Ambassadors

City of Atlanta
Community Court

Positive Outlook
Foundation Inc

**For more
information,
contact Protip
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Commission on
Homelessness
404-527-7237**

United Way Regional Commission on Homelessness Success Story: Jack Hopkins



Jack Hopkins was a hard working, family man before he was homeless. He was once in charge of the heating/air systems for an entire college campus in Atlanta, owned a home in Gwinnett County, and supported his family. However, his life turned in another direction when he was incarcerated after a car chase incident that occurred while he was attempting to detoxify from pain medications.

When released from prison, Jack had no one to turn to and no where to go. He became homeless, was robbed, and was incarcerated again as a result of an arrest for public drunkenness.

After spending four years sleeping in the woods, the streets, and a few shelters, Jack became determined to get back on his feet. He sought help from United Way of Metro Atlanta's headquarters. There he was connected with Positive Outlook Foundation Inc, a United Way supported transitional housing program that provided him with housing, intensive case management, and supportive services.

He worked hard to become self sufficient again. Positive Outlook assisted him by providing an address that he could use for resumes and helping him obtain his social security card and even a MARTA card so that he could travel to job interviews. Of the help Jack received from United Way and its partner agencies, Jack says, "These are good people, willing to help and listen."

Jack now has a warm apartment, is rebuilding his connections with his family, receives social security benefits, and works part-time for a waste management company. He says this about his journey: "I couldn't be in a better place as far as what United Way of Metro Atlanta has done for me".

For more information contact Protip Biswas at 404.527.7237 or pbiswas@unitedwayatlanta.org.

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