



SHC

Support, Housing, Community

P.O. Box 440436, Somerville, MA 02144

Phone: (617) 623-6111 Fax: (617) 776-7165

Programs

Adult Shelter
Family Shelter
Project SOUP

Housing Services

Better Homes
PASS
Passages
Shelter + Care
Sobriety and Stability

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Mark Alston-Follansbee

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November 19, 2007

Dear friends:

Each year around the holidays, many of us think about the meaning of *home*—the communities in which we live, work, and learn; the people that we call family; and the very physical structures that shield us from the approaching winter. Here at the Somerville Homeless Coalition, *home* is our business.

We operate ten programs that work with almost 2,000 people each year. We work with low-income people to keep them in their homes, to prevent homelessness. We also work with people who are chronically homeless, to successfully make the transition from the street to permanent housing. And we are there in emergencies, when someone needs a bed in our shelter because there is no other place to turn, or they don't have enough food and come to the pantry.

This is also the time of year when we hear more about homelessness, so let me tell you about the meal I went to today. Our staff prepares a Thanksgiving dinner for all of our community in the basement of the Methodist Church. I was so happy to see people we worked with years ago come back for the meal, which was great, but more importantly to renew their friendships with other guests and staff. And I got to meet Mr. B, someone the staff talks about frequently, who lived on the street for almost 20 years before we put him in one of our apartments two years ago. They were all healthy and happy and expressed their gratitude for the help we give them.

What we know is that *the answer to homelessness is a home*. SHC currently houses 90 people in permanent housing and about 120 in emergency shelter every year. Over 200 receive comprehensive case management. Each month, over 500 people are served by our food programs through Project SOUP—best known as New England's first free supper program. As a community, we are working each day to end homelessness. With your help, we continue to be successful. Last year 63% of our families in shelter moved onto permanent housing.

As we prepare for the winter and the approaching New Year, we are again asking you that you join us in our mission of transforming people's lives. Please know how grateful we are for all the support you have given in the past. Together we can end hunger and homelessness in our community.

Sincerely,

Mark

Mark Alston-Follansbee
Executive Director



www.SomervilleHomelessCoalition.org

P.S. You can also give online through our website:

www.SomervilleHomelessCoalition.org