

CHANGING LIVES

128 YEARS OF SERVICE



"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

WHY CAN'T I SLEEP?

**DENVER
RESCUE
MISSION**

THE TRUTH ABOUT SLEEP DEPRIVATION AND HOMELESSNESS

CITY GRANT TO PROVIDE UPGRADES TO MISSION FACILITIES

Dear Friends,

When I really think about it, I am amazed by the number of people who sleep at our facilities each night. We have 1,428 beds available for those experiencing homelessness. WaKeeney, the town I was born in, which is located in western Kansas, has a population of 1,776 people, and it is the county seat for Trego County! (This means it is like the capital of the county!) The number of people living there is just slightly more than the number of people sleeping in our beds at the Mission on any given night. If you think about it, we are sheltering more people than those living in many small towns across the Midwest.

In this issue of *Changing Lives*, you are going to read about how important sleep is, but you knew that because if you are like me, your mom told you how important it is! Plus, how many of us ever stayed up too late and then tried to function the next day on way too little rest? It is hard to concentrate on whatever is important that day when you are not getting any sleep. That is why having a warm, dry bed is so important to people experiencing homelessness. Once they can get a meal and good night's sleep, they can begin connecting with our staff and volunteers to discuss the options for getting off of the street.

But please hear me when I say, shelters are not the permanent answer to homelessness. We are the triage site—the first responders to the emergency—who then work to find a permanent solution. If folks will just come into our shelters, we can help them. They can feel safe from the threats of the street, and we can assist them with moving into a life of productivity and self-sufficiency. It is what we do. It is our mission, and thanks to Jesus and supporters like you, we have been privileged to help people out of homelessness for the past 128 years.

So, tonight, when you climb into your bed, I hope you will join us in praying for those who are trying to sleep in one of our beds. We appreciate you!

God bless,

Brad Meuli
President / CEO



CBS 4 AND DENVER RESCUE MISSION ARE JOINING FORCES TO HELP SPREAD THE WARMTH THIS WINTER!

As temperatures drop, food and shelter can be a lifeline for someone in need.



DENVER RESCUE MISSION

JUST \$10 PROVIDES SAFE SHELTER FOR ONE NIGHT AND THREE WARM MEALS FOR ONE OF OUR HOMELESS NEIGHBORS.

To help spread the warmth this winter, text "warmth" to 24365. Visit our blog to learn more!



3 secrets for a FULFILLING LIFE

Humans were designed with a need for identity, mission and belonging. When we orient our lives around things that satisfy these needs, we will feel more fulfilled and alive. Three proven keys to experiencing fulfillment are:

- *Investing* in experiences, instead of things.
- *Practicing* gratitude.
- *Giving*

Visit DenverRescueMission.org/LegacyGiving or contact Cindy Hendricks at CHendricks@DenRescue.org or 303.313.2441 to learn more.



THE TRUTH ABOUT SLEEP DEPRIVATION AND HOMELESSNESS

One of the key requirements for health, strength and a sound mind is the same thing that makes them feel most at risk. This is the irony of sleep among our homeless neighbors.

Staying on the streets can expose them to hazards such as inclement weather and violence. Staying in shelters often means busy and crowded environments, which is why Denver Rescue Mission works hard to make our shelters as comfortable as possible for our guests.

Richard, a guest who has been staying at the Mission's 48th Street Center for the past six months, said he prefers staying in a shelter over sleeping on the streets.

"Unfortunately, being homeless and sleeping on the streets, you have to keep one eye open and one eye closed because you never know when crime's going to surface," he said. "You have to be alert and have your guard up."

The 48th Street Center is a 48,000-square-foot warehouse that accommodates 486 guests and is operated by the Mission in partnership with the City of Denver. It is currently the largest overnight shelter in Denver, and the city provides bus transportation for guests to travel to and from the shelter each day.

Director for Homelessness Resolution at the Department of Housing Stability, Chris Conner, was a key influencer in the purchasing and development of the 48th Street Center.

He said that the city has been working closely with the Mission to provide shelter programming that is not just resolving immediate basic needs, but orienting guests to housing opportunities.

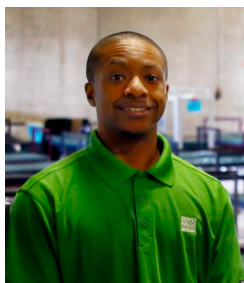
"The Mission has responded strongly to deeper coordinated strategies to assist people from the streets and has cultivated relationships with other providers to build successful resolutions," he said.

Brandon Walker, emergency services shelter supervisor for the Mission, said that some nights at the shelter are quieter than others.

In his experience, the two main causes of sleep deprivation among guests at the 48th Street Center are substance abuse* and mental illness. Some guests struggle with night terrors. New guests struggle with the unfamiliar environment of being surrounded by a few hundred other people.

According to Advanced Sleep Medicine Services, Inc., getting an inadequate amount of sleep can have a significant impact on mental health and can hinder emotional and cognitive regulation.

That's why the work of the overnight staff at our shelters is crucial. Brandon and the other staff members frequently talk with guests



MEET BRANDON

Brandon has been working night shifts at the Mission for about two years. During his shifts at our emergency shelters, he is responsible for ensuring that the facilities have everything they need to operate smoothly and provide clean, safe environments for guests.

**Our shelters are considered "damp," meaning we don't require a breathalyzer or urinalysis to stay overnight, but substance use is not permitted on site.*



"Some of the guys who come here feel like they've been neglected, abandoned and kicked to the curb, but this [place] has made a tremendous difference." - Richard, 48th Street Center guest

who have trouble sleeping to hear how they can help. If guests need personal assistance, they often move them to quieter, less crowded areas. They hand out ear plugs to help with noise and extra sheets to cover their faces.

"Usually, when we just talk to them, that gets them to go lay back down," Brandon said.

Richard said he wakes up periodically every couple of hours and is grateful for the caring staff members. "I get up and take a lap around the facility and go talk to the overnight crew," he said.

Our staff awakens guests at 5:00 a.m. to start boarding the first of many buses that head to the Lawrence Street Community Center for breakfast. The guests return in the evenings to a cleaned facility and staff members who welcome them as they choose their beds for the evening. Guests can receive guidance from Peer Navigators, Mission staff members who have personally experienced homelessness and successfully transitioned into housing. They are available in the evenings to meet with guests and help them develop plans to exit the shelter system and transition back into society.

Through a grant awarded by the City of Denver, the 48th Street Center is getting lockers installed this year to keep our guests' belongings safe.

EXCITING NEWS AT THE MISSION

GRANT AWARDED TO SUPPORT MISSION'S SHELTER SERVICES

We are excited to announce that we've been awarded a grant by the City of Denver's Department of Housing Stability, which will provide upgrades to our shelter services, allowing us to better accommodate guests and reach more individuals in need. The three-year grant provides funding for capital projects, including ADA modifications at the Lawrence Street Shelter and improvements that will support guests with mobility impairments. It will enable additional staff positions at our downtown facilities and the installation of 600 new storage lockers. It will also provide programmatic services, including street outreach in the Ballpark Neighborhood and the expansion of our behavioral health services. Tracy Brooks, senior director of emergency services, said the hope is that these initiatives will encourage individuals who have been hesitant or unable to engage in services to begin the process of change through the resources offered by the Mission.

Learn more about this grant at
[DenverRescueMission.org/Blog](https://denverrescuemission.org/blog).

"They're making all kinds of changes for our benefit, and a lot of people are really pleased with that," Richard said.

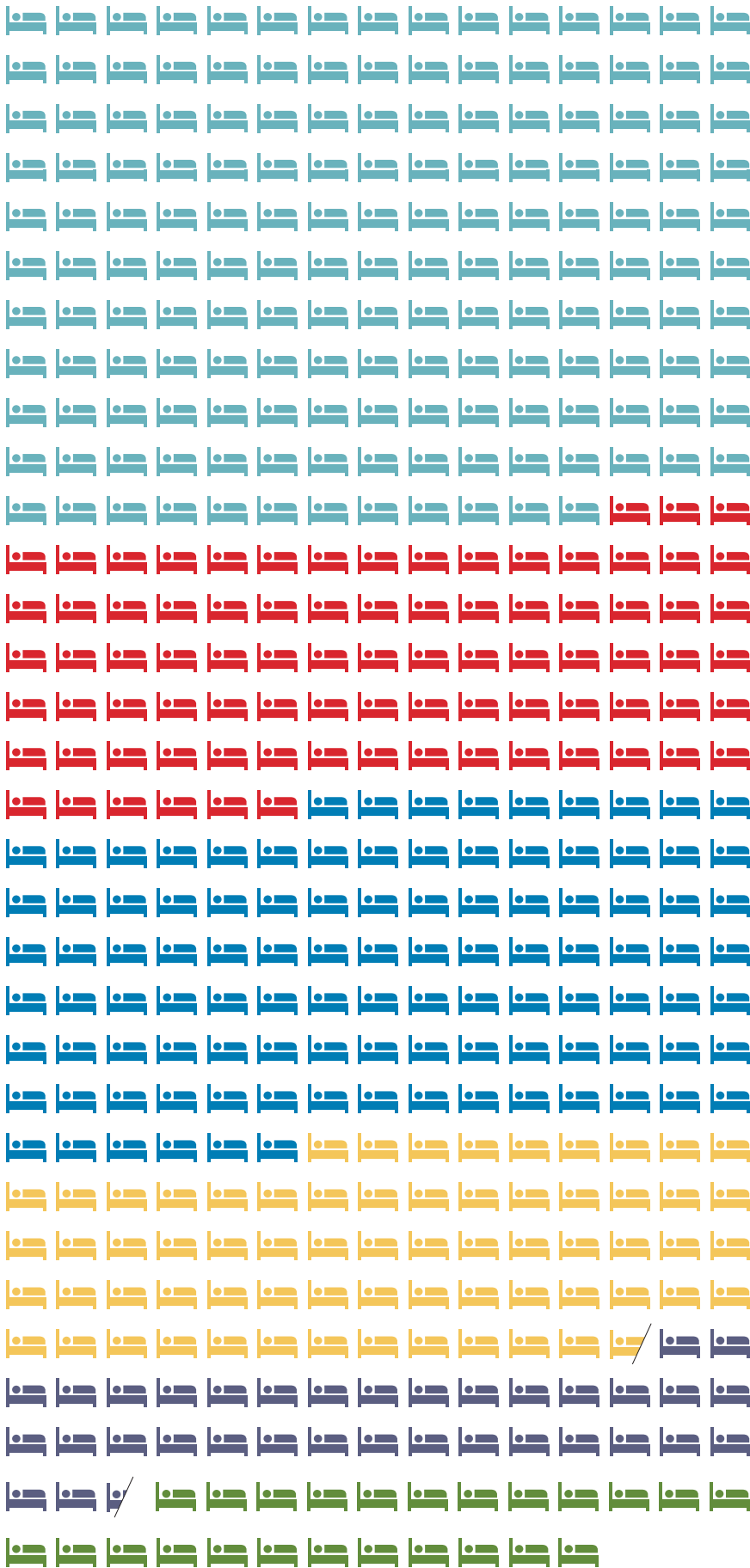
The team is also working on getting a coffee station and more activities to keep them occupied. "We don't want them to feel like this is a permanent place, but while they're here, we want to make it as comfortable as possible," Brandon said.

The main goal? Break the cycle of homelessness. In 2019, the Mission was able to help 451 guests transition out of shelters through our services in Denver and Fort Collins. Additionally, 682 shelter guests joined one of the Mission's long-term programs.

"If we have hundreds of guys and 20 of them make it out, to me, that's a success because it lets us know we're doing something right," Brandon said. "That's part of what keeps me going, because that's my hope for all of them." ■

This winter, your support is providing warm beds to people who would otherwise sleep outside. To partner with us, give today at:

[DENVERRESCUEMISSION.ORG/CHANGINGLIVES](https://denverrescuemission.org/changinglives)



486^{BEDS}
AT
48th Street Center

315^{BEDS}
AT
Lawrence Street Shelter

252^{BEDS}
AT
The Crossing

200^{BEDS}
AT
Holly Center


103^{BEDS}
AT
Fort Collins Rescue Mission

72^{BEDS}
AT
Harvest Farm

REST FOR THE WEARY

With your support, the Mission is able to provide **1,428 beds** at our facilities in Denver and Northern Colorado each night. Thank you for providing a warm place to sleep for those who desperately need the rest.



 = 3 BEDS

Will you describe your church group that stitches to support the Mission?

Stitchin' with a Mission is a group of about seven women and girls who meet twice a month to make clothing and apparel for people in need. We've been stitching hats and scarves for the Mission for the past three years. We also do a church-wide collection of purchased hats, scarves and gloves in addition to the handmade items.



How many items did you donate last year, and how long did they take to make?

A total of about 500 items were donated to the Mission. I'd say close to 200 hats were handmade and about 70 scarves. We work on the items from January to November each year and create them by knitting, crocheting and stitching on a knitting loom, which takes about three hours to make per hat.

What inspired you to help start this group?

I had been making hats on my own and got connected with another woman at church who was making scarves, and we teamed up to start the group. God has really laid on my heart the need to help people who are less fortunate. He has really impressed on me the concept that when we help others who are less fortunate, we are really ministering to Jesus. This group is just an outpouring of that, and the women who come all have that same heart.

What is the goal of the group?

The goal of the group is to serve the Lord through our gifts of handwork and use our talents for His glory and for those who are less fortunate. We're hoping to encourage people that they can use little gifts to make a big impact in someone's life.

What made you choose Denver Rescue Mission as the recipient of these items?

We saw individuals who needed help, and nothing's worse than being cold. It doesn't solve the entire problem, but it helps. My son works as a paramedic in Denver, and I once made him a hat. He told me that he was working night shifts at the time and saw a man who was homeless. He goes, "Mom, I gave him my hat because he needed it more than I did." That was an inspiration to me.

Why does Denver Rescue Mission matter to you?

In Parker, we run into a number of people who are experiencing homelessness, and we get a glimpse of the work that you're doing. I just think it's wonderful, and the fact that you're doing it in the name of Christ and spreading the word of the Lord while you're doing it is just fantastic.

Stitchin' with a Mission is a group that meets twice a month to stitch handmade items to help people in need. They are a part of the Missions Committee at Parker Evangelical Presbyterian Church.



OUR CORE STRATEGIES



EMERGENCY SERVICES

People are invited inside, off the street where their immediate needs are met and critical relationships are built with Mission staff.



REHABILITATION

Men living with an addiction are equipped with work readiness skills, receive help to overcome destructive habits, find permanent housing, and begin a new life.



TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS


Families and individuals in need receive case management, develop life skills and save for permanent housing.





COMMUNITY OUTREACH


People struggling in our community receive assistance with food, clothing, furniture, household items and holiday meals.


LOCATIONS


Lawrence Street Community Center: Meals, restrooms, showers, laundry, clean drinking water, and access to Mission staff for encouragement and guidance 


Lawrence Street Shelter: Overnight shelter for men and chapel 


Holly Center: Overnight shelter for men assigned weekly and lockers for storage 

The Crossing: Transitional program for families and rehabilitation program for men 

Harvest Farm: Rural rehabilitation program near Fort Collins 

Fort Collins Rescue Mission: Meals, shelter and programs toward achieving self-sufficiency 

Ministry Outreach Center: Central warehouse facility including food, clothing and furniture distribution 

Administration & Education: Entry point for Mission transitional programs and home to the Mission's administrative and development staff 

48th Street Center: Overnight shelter for men, operated in partnership with the City of Denver 