

# CHANGING LIVES

128 YEARS OF SERVICE



# BETTER TOGETHER

*"He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak."*

Isaiah 40:29

**DENVER  
RESCUE  
MISSION**

HOW WE ARE PROTECTING OUR HOMELESS NEIGHBORS DURING COVID-19

DENVER BRONCOS LINEBACKER JOE JONES ON WHY THE MISSION MATTERS

Dear Friends,

We have been in a battle for the last several months, but we have not been alone. We have had daily calls with nonprofit shelter providers, the Department of Housing Stability (HOST), the Department of Public Health and Environment (DDPHE), Denver City Council, Denver Police Department, and many others, to figure out next steps. After a long process, Denver Rescue Mission relocated its shelter services to a 24/7 shelter operation for men with 765 beds at the National Western Complex.

We are thrilled to have this! Complete with medical screenings by the Stout Street Health Center, this facility has allowed us to socially distance our guests and identify folks who may be infected with the novel coronavirus. After many weeks, we now have masks so that we can try and protect each other as we interact. This supplemental shelter took a lot of work and has truly been a collaborative effort.

I continue to be impressed with the way our city has pulled together, knowing that our actions could mean the difference between life and death for some of Denver's most vulnerable. I am so grateful for our staff, who have been flexible in the face of one of the greatest crises our nation has ever experienced. While most of the world was following stay-at-home orders, we have had to willingly run into the fire for the people God loves and cares for.

And our volunteers have continued to come! We are an essential service, and our volunteers are too. I continue to be moved by their desire to join us in this fight.

Most importantly, we are never alone in this battle because the God of the universe is right here with us. At the Mission, we have T-shirts that say, "Hope Starts Here," and now, more than ever, we are living this out. We have had the opportunity to show the love of Jesus by standing in harm's way, compassionately serving our guests and letting them know that they are loved.

I do so love this job! It goes without saying that it has been really hard lately, and we have not had all the answers, but we know God is in control. He has been, still is and will always be in control. He is our hope.

Your partnership with us in this difficult time is especially appreciated and allows the light of Jesus to shine bright. We are so grateful for you!

God Bless,

Brad Meuli  
President/CEO



To learn more about the National Western Complex auxiliary shelter and updates on our response to this pandemic, visit [DenverRescueMission.org/COVID19](https://DenverRescueMission.org/COVID19).

# IMPORTANT NEWS

## CARES Act Offers TAX RELIEF to Donors!

We cherish your continued support in this challenging time.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CARES Act offers a charitable deduction for up to \$300 in donations to taxpayers who **do not** itemize their returns. The goal is to help groups and nonprofits affected by the coronavirus and the economic crisis.

For more information about the CARES Act, visit [DenverRescueMission.org/Blog](https://DenverRescueMission.org/Blog).

## Updated Amazon Wish List



The Mission has various needs throughout the year, especially now, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

*We're in need of non-perishable food to stock our kitchens and cleaning supplies to keep our facilities sanitized.*

Did you know that you can purchase these items directly from our Amazon Wish List and have them sent straight to us?



Access our Amazon Greatest Needs List at [DenverRescueMission.org/Give-Items](https://DenverRescueMission.org/Give-Items).



# NUMBERS OF HOPE

Statistics of the novel coronavirus have been flooding the news and causing many feelings of unrest, so we want to take a moment to share some numbers\* of hope. We know one thing that we can rest in is the promise of God's sovereignty. Since Colorado declared a state of emergency at the beginning of March, we have been able to continue serving vulnerable men, women and children in the midst of COVID-19. Thanks to your generosity:

**124** FIRST-TIME GUESTS VISITED THE  
LAWRENCE STREET COMMUNITY CENTER

**78,410** MEALS WERE SERVED AT  
MISSION FACILITIES

*\*Numbers reflect the time frame of 3/12 – 4/30 and represent Denver and Northern Colorado facilities and programs.*

**255** NEW VOLUNTEERS SERVED MEALS  
TO MISSION GUESTS

**55+** TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES WERE  
HIRED FOR ESSENTIAL DUTIES

**14** PARTICIPANTS GRADUATED FROM  
THE NEW LIFE PROGRAM AND  
STAR TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM

**15** IPADS WERE MADE AVAILABLE TO  
CHILDREN LIVING AT THE CROSSING  
FOR ONLINE LEARNING, THANKS TO  
GENEROUS DONATIONS



# BETTER TOGETHER.



THROUGH THE DARK TIMES OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC, HEARTS FOR OUR HOMELESS GUESTS SHINE BRIGHT.

The past 128 years at Denver Rescue Mission have presented different kinds of challenges, but none quite as unique as the one we've been facing the past few months—a season in which the protocol for society has been an impossible feat for our guests: *stay home*.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a time when we've depended on God wholeheartedly for protection, a time when the community

has helped keep our doors open, and as our President/CEO Brad Meuli said to encourage staff, "a time for the light of Jesus to shine through all of us."

The Mission is considered an essential service, and because many recreation centers, libraries and other businesses shut down, for many of our guests, both regulars and first-timers, the Mission has been their only place to go.



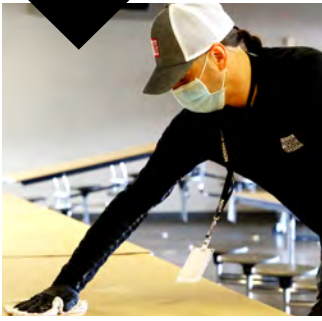
## VOLUNTEER HEROES: PETER DIECK

Our need for volunteers has been greater than ever. And volunteer slots have continued to be filled with people like Peter Dieck, who said he wanted to help because he's healthy, has a strong immune system and isn't exposed to many people. Peter showed up five mornings a week at 6:30 a.m. to help serve breakfast to guests at the Lawrence Street Community Center.

"I am able, I have the time and there's a need," he said. "There are fewer places open and not a lot of food on shelves. I feel inspired when I see somebody coming through [the line], and before I even get a chance to say 'good morning' and 'God bless you,' they say that to me."



## FACE MASK HEROES: MARK HUANG



The safety of our frontline staff has been crucial. When Mark Huang, CRNA at a local hospital, heard about our shortage of personal protective equipment, he posted about the need on his Facebook page, which led to the donation of about 600 masks as people in his network quickly took action. One of Mark's friends learned how to use a sewing machine and made 100 masks in less than a week! When asked why it's important to support the homeless community during COVID-19, Mark's response was as powerful as it was simple: "because Jesus said we should."

*Pictured: Mission staff wearing masks thanks to Mark's donation.*



## LOCAL BUSINESS HEROES: TENDER BELLY

Shortly after Mayor Michael Hancock announced the closing of all Denver restaurants, dozens of companies donated food to the Mission. 190,000 pounds of donated food were given out to support the community and used to prepare meals for our guests.

Tender Belly, a local business that sources high-quality pork products, donated 9,900 pounds of food. "We felt inspired to act quickly for those in need," said Stephanie Duffy of Tender Belly. "While our business took a tremendous hit with all the restaurants closing, it is nothing in comparison to having no one to help you through this time, feeling scared, and being food insecure. I immediately thought of the Mission and the tireless work you do."



## RETURNING HEROES: STEVEN DUKES



Because social distancing is a challenge in shelter environments, the Mission started cleaning its facilities on an hourly basis. To support this effort, among other needs, we hired about 33 temporary employees, which in turn supported individuals who lost their jobs due to the pandemic.

Steven Dukes, a New Life Program (NLP) graduate, lost his restaurant job and a few days later, he was hired for one of the Mission's temporary positions. Steven was tasked with cleaning the Lawrence Street Shelter, and his duties included mopping the floors, cleaning the bathrooms and sanitizing the same bed frames that he slept on when he was a guest.

"This place has been cleaner than it has ever been," Steven said. "I feel blessed in the midst of this. I feel like I have a hedge of protection. I could be homeless at any time by making a mistake, so I'm helping my people. They're my people."

*You may remember Steven from the July 2019 issue of Changing Lives.*

*Read his story at [DenverRescueMission.org/Steven](https://denverrescuemission.org/Steven).*



## NEW LIFE PROGRAM HEROES: TONY

The New Life Program (NLP), the Mission's long-term rehabilitation program, suspended its classes to minimize group settings, so participants have filled their time by helping with various tasks. Tony, a NLP participant, has been working in the kitchen with other participants and said it's been a refreshing distraction from the pandemic. "Everybody takes a step back, takes a deep breath, gets their wits about them, and pulls together as a team," Tony said.



During a season of darkness and uncertainty, the light of Jesus shines bright. We don't know how long the effects of COVID-19 will last, but we know that through the courage of our Mission family and the community at large, we are better, together. ■

*\*This content was written in April 2020. With the rapidly changing environment, we realize a lot could have changed by the time this reached your hands, but we hope you feel inspired by our reflection on this point in time at the Mission.*

During COVID-19, 49 of our program participants lost their jobs and there were 124 first-time guests at Lawrence Street Community Center. The ripple effect of the pandemic left tens of thousands of other Coloradans unemployed, and we expect the needs of our homeless neighbors to increase. Join us in supporting the most vulnerable in our community at:

**[DenverRescueMission.org/ChangingLives](https://denverrescuemission.org/ChangingLives)**

**What inspired you to give a monetary donation to the Mission during the COVID-19 crisis?**

I have seen firsthand the great work that the Mission has done for this community. Knowing how much you help and care for people in unfortunate situations aligns with who I am and with my values and core beliefs.



**Why was it important to you to support individuals experiencing homelessness during the pandemic?**

My love for and faith in Jesus Christ spearheads my actions in most of what I do (not that I'm perfect in everything that I do). Jesus calls us to love and care for the less fortunate. One of those examples is Matthew 25:35-40. Those verses have taken root deep down in my heart, and my actions toward the less fortunate have been affected by that.

**How has your involvement in the Mission's Turkey Drive at the UHealth Training Center impacted you personally?**

Giving toward the COVID-19 crisis and donating for the turkey drive go hand-in-hand with each other. They are both opportunities for me and my family to see that there are others out there who are less fortunate than us, and for us to do something as small as providing meals makes a major impact on others. I feel that the platform and blessings that the Lord has given me is not just for me and my family.

**Why does the Mission's work in breaking the cycle of homelessness in Denver matter to you?**

People always deserve a chance to better their lives. Whether they are in their current situations because of unforeseen circumstances or poor choices, everyone deserves an opportunity to get back on their feet. The Mission helps people do just that. You are doing amazing things here, especially in this time of increased need in our country. You are true heroes to many people.



*Joe Jones is a fourth-year American football linebacker for the Denver Broncos. He is originally from Plano, Illinois and played college football at Northwestern. He lives in Denver with his wife, Amber, and two daughters, Scarlette and Aurora.*



**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 