

# CHANGING LIVES

129 YEARS OF SERVICE



## COVID-19: *ONE YEAR LATER*

What We've Learned and How We're Pressing On

**DENVER  
RESCUE  
MISSION**

THE BENEFITS OF 24/7 SHELTERING

TUNE IN TO OUR MARCH 10 ONLINE EVENT

## LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Dear Friends,

A year ago, I was in Washington, DC, with CEOs from Rescue Missions across the country to learn about legislation that might impact our organizations and to meet with our congressional leaders. On the last day, my phone started lighting up with text messages from home about COVID-19. All the offices of senators and representatives started closing because an aide had tested positive. Anyone who had traveled had to leave. When I boarded a plane home, I did not have any idea what we would be going through or what the future might hold.

In this newsletter, you will read about some of the *good* that has come out of the past year. We do not have the space in this newsletter to share everything, and the list is long. Having shelters that operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week is one of those good things, and you will read about the various benefits in this edition.

The great news is that we will be able to continue offering 24/7 sheltering to guests thanks to your support. In partnership with the City of Denver, we will be operating a new 24/7 shelter called 48th Avenue East with more beds available. We anticipate this opening in the spring, God willing.

Additionally, I am very excited to share with you that we will be reopening our Lawrence Street Shelter soon, after remodeling it to follow Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines (including a new elevator!) and improving the basement to provide socially distanced beds.

Among our Denver facilities, including Lawrence Street Shelter, 48th Avenue Center and our overflow shelter, Holly Center, we will now be able to shelter 1,000 men per night while maintaining social distancing. Of these beds, 675 will be available 24/7.

This change to 24/7 sheltering requires a significant increase in staff and resources. A year ago, I never would have imagined that the Mission would have approximately 340 staff members across our various facilities. I am in awe of God's provision during this time. God has watched over us and guided us through this herculean effort over the last year, and we are not finished moving forward.

Please know that we could not have done this without your financial support and heartfelt prayers. Thank you for joining in this journey with us!

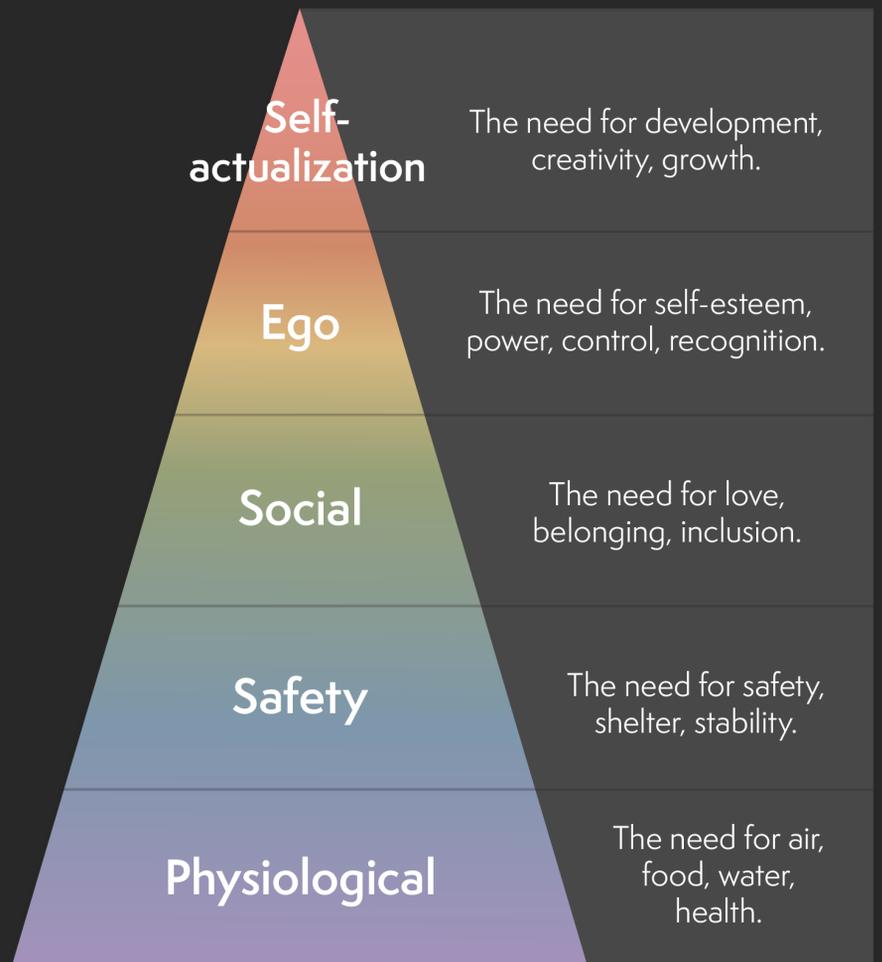
God bless,



Brad Meuli  
President/CEO



# Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Through the Mission's emergency services, we meet guests' basic needs, reflected in the bottom two tiers of the hierarchy, which gives them the capacity to focus on the needs reflected in the top three tiers.

## JOIN OUR ONLINE EVENT!

### Pressing On: Positive Impacts from a Pandemic Year

Wednesday, March 10, 2021 | 4:00 p.m.

To register, visit [DenverRescueMission.org/PressingOn](https://DenverRescueMission.org/PressingOn).

# COVID-19: ONE YEAR LATER

## What We've Learned and How We're Pressing On

It's been one year since a state of emergency was declared in Denver following the outbreak of COVID-19 and the world turned upside down. But, thanks to your kindness and support, Denver Rescue Mission and people like Joseph who come to us for help are pressing on and finding silver linings in the midst of adversity.

Every day since the start of the pandemic, Mission staff members receive an email with the names of frontline employees to pray for, along with a request to pray for volunteers and guests. We believe that through the power of prayer, we have been able to persevere this past year—a year in which hope, strength and resilience have taken on new meanings.

Within a matter of weeks after the virus broke out in Denver, the Mission transitioned from its regular operations to running a new, temporary shelter for 765 men at the National Western Complex (NWC). This large space allowed for ample social distancing where frontline staff averaged 27,000 steps a day.

Tracy Brooks, senior director of emergency services who oversees the Mission's shelter operations, said that the majority of the team members she started with before the pandemic stayed onboard, faithfully rising to every occasion. "I think my frontline staff is pretty incredible and every day show up and do the hard things and work with people going through really hard times," she said.



Denver Coliseum auxiliary shelter

As our staff responded to constant changes during the pandemic, they also had to help our guests process what was happening. "The reality of working with the guests is that what we're feeling, they're feeling too," Tracy said. "You have guests you are working with every day who are afraid. Their world has been turned upside down too."

The Mission operated out of NWC until August and then opened two 24/7 shelters for men at the Denver Coliseum and 48th Avenue Center, where we served three meals three a day and offered restrooms, showers and storage for guests.

At all three facilities, the biggest feat was shifting to 24/7 sheltering, instead of just offering overnight shelter. This required more man hours, significant staffing increases, new case management and policy changes, and much more. But this feat resulted in many benefits.

"The first couple of weeks [at] National Western, I think all of us were blown away by how much [our guests] slept," Tracy said. "They could sleep when they needed to sleep."

Another benefit of 24/7 sheltering was the ability to provide reserved beds for guests' entire stay since we had more space available. "With the same bed, they get to know the people around them and that gives them that additional sense of safety and security," Tracy said.



Tracy Brooks, Senior Director of Emergency Services

Joseph has been staying at the 48th Avenue Center since August and appreciates having an assigned bed.\* "I'm familiar with the people I'm around, and it makes me more comfortable," he said. "I really appreciate the security."

According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which is a foundational concept in social services, when individuals lack in basic needs such as food, water and sleep, it's hard for them to think about anything else.\*\*

**"You need nourishment; you need rest; you need comfort," Joseph said. "When you know you have somewhere to stay—what a great feeling."**

In addition to meals, shelter and showers, the Mission has been offering case management services at 48th Avenue Center to help guests make tangible plans to exit the shelter system and secure stable housing. Since August, 86 percent of individuals have kept their appointments with case workers. "We're seeing that as people's basic needs are met, they are willing to engage and talk about solutions," Tracy said. "We have continued to work with individuals [to] get them housing-ready."

For Joseph, the Mission has been his only place of refuge while he has been in and out of the hospital over the past year due to medical complications.

"[The Mission] has helped me through all my medical crises," Joseph said. "If I need help with something, they're always there."

Recently, Joseph's case worker helped him obtain his birth certificate so he can pursue his goal of settling in to a place of his own for the first time in 15 years.

Along with many of our guests, Joseph has also been seeking God during this difficult time. "One thing that I have noticed is that everybody's faith has grown," he said. "You see a lot of people in here with Bibles—reading every day. They got back to the one thing that's always there, and that's God. That's the one thing you can always count on."

While the pandemic has brought about many changes and challenges, it has also provided silver linings for people like Joseph. And, just like Joseph, we will continue to count on God every day and put our trust in Him to press on. ■



Denver Coliseum auxiliary shelter



48th Avenue Center



48th Avenue Center

\*Name changed to protect guest's identity  
\*\*Source: [simplypsychology.org/maslow.html](https://simplypsychology.org/maslow.html)

We made it through a year since the pandemic hit Denver, but the battle is not over. Your support can mean life or death for people like Joseph who are especially vulnerable.

Give today at [DenverRescueMission.org/ChangingLives](https://DenverRescueMission.org/ChangingLives).



“I’m thankful to have a roof over my head, meals and somewhere to sleep [during the pandemic]. I’ve just had to be strong and pray. I reached out to God, and I know my patience is like me climbing a mountain. I know it’s hard for me to make it, but God’s going to pull me up.”

-48th Avenue Center guest

*Pictured: Guest at Denver Coliseum auxiliary shelter in summer 2020.*

# THE MISSION in my words




## DIANE HOLBERT

Diane Holbert, CTP and VP Treasury Sales and Services Officer at Pacific Western Bank, is a Certified Treasury Professional with an extensive background in banking and public services.

### In addition to supporting our downtown Christmas meal, what inspired Pacific Western Bank to donate to Denver Rescue Mission during COVID-19?

Pacific Western Bank's leadership and its employees are community-centric and responsive to the needs of the communities in which we live. When the pandemic hit, we engaged quickly. We had two objectives: ensure that local economies were supported through partnerships with local small business development agencies and ensure that those who serve the most vulnerable populations have the resources they need.

### In what ways has your involvement with the Mission impacted you and your team?

My team and I believe that giving back to our community is inherently important to who we are as a bank and individuals. Creating a culture of generosity and caring about and respecting the individuals who find themselves in a time of need is paramount to a rewarding workplace environment. We are honored to partner with the Mission to play our small part in breaking the cycle of homelessness and providing opportunities for self-sufficiency as well as providing shelter from the storm and a hot meal. This is what serving our fellow man is about.

### Why is the Mission's work important to you personally?

When I was a little girl, I had the opportunity to visit museums and stores in downtown Chicago occasionally with my parents or on field trips. On one such trip, I experienced an event which has stayed with me to this day. It was my first experience witnessing the effects of homelessness on another person. It was not his appearance that made an impression on this girl from rural Illinois—it was his desperate hunger. His reaching into a waste bin on the corner of a cold and dirty downtown street and pulling out a crust of someone's unfinished sandwich—eating right there without hesitation—indelibly impressed this picture of need and suffering on my heart. This is why the Rescue Mission is so meaningful to me—to bring hope, respect and love to those who are striving to survive, grow and succeed in this world.

## OUR CORE STRATEGIES



EMERGENCY SERVICES



REHABILITATION



TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## 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 Avenue Center:** Overnight shelter for men, operated in partnership with the City of Denver 

## THOUGHTS?

Send your questions and comments to [Newsletter@DenRescue.org](mailto:Newsletter@DenRescue.org).

DENVER RESCUE MISSION  
IS A PROUD MEMBER OF:



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